MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

SIR OLIVER LODGE

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MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE ADVANCE IN SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE UPON OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

OLIVER LODGE

NATURE'S VAST FRAME, THE WEB OF HUMAN THINGS,
BIRTH AND THE GRAVE, THAT ARE NOT AS THEY WERE.
SHELLEY

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MOFFITT

I have felt
A Presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

WORDSWORTH

And this to fill us with regard for man,
With apprehension of his passing worth,
Desire to work his proper nature out,
And ascertain his rank and final place;
For these things tend still upward, progress is
The law of life, man is not Man as yet.

BROWNING

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PREFACE

IF an apology is needed for the appearance of this book, as an outcome of the study of physical science, it must be found—partly in the special utterance permissible, or even necessary, after a century of discoveries which at one time seemed antagonistic to any reasonable view of Christianity,—and partly in the human right and duty to discern something of the relations between Man, Nature, and God.

Every one living in a period of religious awakening, and aware that human beings are among the effective and conscious agents in a process of evolution, is bound to do what he can towards stimulating a keener sense of the mystery and infinitude of the universe, and a wider recognition of the fact of human power and responsibility ;—power to promote a further understanding of the possibilities of existence, both here and hereafter,—power also to assist in guiding the race towards a gradually growing destiny, and responsibility for a due share in preparing the way for the coming Kingdom.

LERICI, *April* 1908

189150

A great part of this book has appeared from time to time in the *Hibbert Journal*, a smaller part in the *Contemporary Review*; and the whole has been thoroughly revised and extended.

The author desires to express his gratitude to Mr. E. D. Girdlestone, of Sutton Coldfield, for the trouble he has taken over the revision of proof sheets, and for many suggestions and emendations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I

SCIENCE AND FAITH

CHAP. PAGE

I. The Outstanding Controversy between Science and Faith 1

The Teachings of Orthodox Science and of Orthodox Religion contrasted.

II. The Reconciliation between Science and Faith 25

The Doctrines of Uniformity, Immanence, Agency, and Control emphasised.

III. Religion, Science, and Miracle 52

Meaning of Miracle—Arguments concerning the Miraculous—Law and Guidance—Miracle and Science—Miracle and Religion—Human Experience.

SECTION II

CORPORATE WORSHIP AND SERVICE

IV. The Alleged Indifference of Laymen to Religion 83

An essay on the Neglect of Church Attendance.

V. Some Suggestions towards Reform . . 93

In the Services of the Anglican Church.

VI. Union and Breadth 109

A plea for essential Unity amid Formal difference in a National Church.

VII. A Reformed Church as an Engine of Progress 138

The power of a truly comprehensive and united Christendom.

SECTION III

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

CHAP. PAGE

VIII. The Transitory and the Permanent . . 155

Body and Soul; Life and Death; Persistence of Existence.

IX. The Permanence of Personality. . . 176

Conservation of Value; Permanent element in Man; Thought and Motion; Argument from Telepathy, Automatism, Subliminal Faculty, Genius, Mental Pathology; Religious objections.

SECTION IV

SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY

X. Suggestions towards the Re-Interpretation of Christian Doctrine 213

Treating of the Atonement and of Regeneration.

XI. Sin, Suffering, and Wrath . . . 235

A Sequel to the preceding.

XII. The Material Element in Christianity . 270

(1) Correspondence of Spiritual and Material;
(2) The Resurrection of the Body;
(3) The Resurrection of Christ.

XIII. The Divine Element in Christianity . . 295

(The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, or the Humanity of God.)

(4) Christianity and History;
(5) Varieties of Christianity,
(6) Ecce Deus.

Glossary of Technical Terms and Statement of Mechanical Laws 321

Index 333

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

SECTION I—SCIENCE AND FAITH

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SECTION I—SCIENCE AND FAITH

CHAPTER I

THE OUTSTANDING CONTROVERSY

I

IT is widely recognised at the present day that the modern spirit of scientific inquiry has in the main exerted a wholesome influence upon Theology, clearing it of much encumbrance of doubtful doctrine, freeing it from slavery to the literal accuracy of historical records, and reducing the region of the miraculous or the incredible, with which it used to be almost conterminous, to a comparatively small area.

This influence is likely to continue as true science advances, but it by no means follows that the nature of the benefit will always be that of a clearing and unloading process. There must come a time when such a process has gone far enough, and when some positive contribution may be expected. Whether such a time has now arrived or not is clearly open to question, but I think it will be admitted that orthodox science at present, though it shows some sign of abstaining

from virulent criticism of religious creeds, is still a long way from contributing in any degree to their support; nor are its followers ready to admit that they may have gone too far, if even far enough, in the negative direction. No doubt both sides would allow that the highest Science and the truest Theology must ultimately be mutually consistent and harmonious; but they are far from presenting that appearance at present.

The term "Theology," as ordinarily used, necessarily signifies nothing ultimate or divine; it signifies only the present state of human knowledge on theological subjects. And similarly the term "Science," if correspondingly employed, represents no fetish to be blindly worshipped as absolute truth, but merely the present state of human knowledge on subjects within its grasp, together with the practical consequences deducible from such knowledge in the opinion of the average scientific man: it usually connotes what may be called orthodox science—the orthodox science of the present day, as set forth by its professed exponents, and as indicated by the general atmosphere, or setting, in which facts in every branch of knowledge are now regarded by cultivated men.

It may be objected that there is no definite body of doctrine which can be classed as orthodox science; and it is true that there is no formulated creed; but I suggest that there is more nearly an orthodox science than there is an orthodox

theology. Professors of theology differ among themselves in a rather conspicuous manner; and even in that branch of it with which alone most Englishmen are familiar, viz. Christian Theology, there are differences of opinion on apparently important issues; as is evidenced by the existence of Sects, ranging from Unitarians on the one side, to Greek and Roman Catholics on the other. In science, sectarianism is less marked; controversies rage chiefly round matters of detail, and on all important issues its professors are agreed. This general consensus of opinion on the part of experts, a general consensus which the public are willing enough to acquiesce in, and adopt as far as they can understand it, is what I mean by the term "science as now understood," or, for brevity, "modern science."

Similarly, by "religious doctrine" we shall mean the general consensus of theologians, so far as they are in agreement, especially perhaps the general consensus of Christian theologians; ignoring as far as possible the presumably minor points on which they differ, and eliminating everything manifestly below the moral level of dogma generally acceptable at the present day.

Now it must, I think, be admitted that the modern scientific atmosphere, in spite of much that is wholesome and nutritious, exercises a sort of blighting influence upon religious ardour. At any rate the great saints or seers have as a rule

not been eminent for their acquaintance with exact scientific knowledge, but, on the contrary, have felt a distrust and a dislike of that uncompromising quest for cold hard truth in which the leaders of science are engaged; while on the other hand, the leaders of science have shown an aloofness from, if not a hostility towards, the theoretical aspects of religion. In fact, it may be held that the general drift or atmosphere of modern science is adverse to the highest religious emotion, because unconvinced of the reality of many of the occurrences upon which such an exalted state of feeling must be based, if it is to be anything more than a wave of transient enthusiasm.

Nevertheless, we must admit that among men of science there have been many who accept fully the facts and implications of science, who accept also the creeds of the Church, and who do not keep the two sets of ideas in watertight compartments of their minds, but do distinctly perceive a reconciling and fusing element.

If we proceed to ask what is this reconciling element, we find that it is neither science nor theology, but that it is either philosophy or poetry. By aid of philosophy, or by aid of poetry, a great deal can be accomplished. Mind and matter may be then no longer two, but one; this material universe may then become the living garment of God; gross matter may be regarded as a mere appearance, a mode of apprehending an idealistic cosmic reality, in which we actually

live and move and have our being; the whole of existence can become infused and suffused with immanent Deity.

No reconciliation would then be necessary between the spiritual and the material, between the laws of Nature and the will of God, because the two would be but aspects of one all-comprehensive pantheistic entity.

All this may possibly be in some sort true, but it is not science as now understood. It is no more science than are the creeds of the Churches. It is a guess, an intuition,—an inspiration perhaps,—but it is not a link in a chain of assured and reasoned knowledge; it can no more be clearly formulated in words, or clearly apprehended in thought, than can any of the high and lofty conceptions of religion. It is, in fact, far more akin to religion than to science. It is no solution of the knotty entanglement, but a soaring above it; it is a reconciliation *in excelsis*.

Minds which can habitually rise to it are, *ipso facto*, essentially religious, and are exercising their religious functions; they have flown off the dull earth of exact knowledge into an atmosphere of faith.

But if this flight be possible, especially if it be ever possible to minds engaged in a daily round of scientific teaching and investigation, how can it be said that the atmosphere of modern science and the atmosphere of religious faith are incompatible? Wherein lies the incompatibility?

My reply briefly is—and this is the kernel of what I have to say—that orthodox modern science shows us a self-contained and self-sufficient universe, not in touch with anything beyond or above itself,—the general trend and outline of it known;—nothing supernatural or miraculous, no intervention of beings other than ourselves, being conceived possible.

While religion, on the other hand, requires us constantly and consciously to be in touch—even affectionately in touch—with a power, a mind, a being or beings, entirely out of our sphere, entirely beyond our scientific ken. The universe contemplated by religion is by no means self-contained or self-sufficient, it is dependent for its origin and maintenance, as we are for daily bread and future hopes, upon the power and the goodwill of a being or beings of which science has no knowledge. Science does not indeed always or consistently deny the existence of such transcendent beings, nor does it make any effectual attempt to limit their potential powers, but it definitely disbelieves in their exerting any actual influence on the progress of events, or in their producing or modifying the simplest physical phenomenon.

For instance, it is now considered unscientific to pray for rain; and Professor Tyndall went so far as to say:

"The principle [of the conservation of energy] teaches us that the Italian wind, gliding over the

crest of the Matterhorn, is as firmly ruled as the earth in its orbital revolution round the sun; and that the fall of its vapour into clouds is exactly as much a matter of necessity as the return of the seasons. The dispersion, therefore, of the slightest mist by the special volition of the Eternal, would be as much a miracle as the rolling of the Rhone over the Grimsel precipices, down the valley of Hasli to Meyringen and Brientz. . . .

"Without the disturbance of a natural law, quite as serious as the stoppage of an eclipse, or the rolling of the river Niagara up the Falls, no act of humiliation, individual or national, could call one shower from heaven, or deflect towards us a single beam of the sun."[1]

Certain objections may be made to this statement of Professor Tyndall's, even from the strictly scientific point of view: the law of the conservation of energy is needlessly dragged in when it has nothing really to do with it. We ourselves, for instance, though we have no power, nor hint of any power, to override the conservation of energy, are yet readily able, by a simple physical experiment, or by an engineering operation, to deflect a ray of light, or to dissipate a mist, or divert a wind, or pump water uphill. And further objections may be made to the form of the statement, notably to the word "therefore" as used to connect propositions entirely different in their

[1] From *Fragments of Science*, "Prayer and Natural Law."

terms. But the meaning is quite plain nevertheless. The assertion is that any act, however simple, if achieved by special volition of the Eternal, would be a miracle; and the implied dogma is that the special volition of the Eternal cannot, or at any rate does not, accomplish anything whatever in the physical world. And this dogma, although not really a deduction from any of the known principles of physical science, and possibly open to objection as a *petitio principii*, may nevertheless be taken as a somewhat exuberant statement of the generally accepted inductive teaching of orthodox science on the subject.

It ought, however, to be admitted at once by Natural Philosophers that the unscientific character of prayer for rain depends really not upon its conflict with any known physical law, since it need involve no greater interference with the order of nature than is implied in a request to a gardener to water the garden—it does not really depend upon the impossibility of causing rain to fall when otherwise it might not—but upon the disbelief of science in any power who can and will attend and act. To prove this, let us bethink ourselves that it is not an inconceivable possibility that at some future date mankind may acquire some control over the weather, and be able to influence it; not merely in an indirect manner, as at present they can affect climate, by felling forests or flooding deserts, but in some

more direct fashion; in that case prayers for rain would begin again,—only the petitions would be addressed, not to heaven, but to the Meteorological Office. We do not at present ask the secretary of that government department to improve our seasons, simply because we do not think that he knows how; if we thought he did, we should not be debarred from approaching him by a suspicion of his possible non-existence, or a fear that our request would not be delivered. Professor Tyndall's dogma, if pressed, will be found to necessitate one of these last alternatives; although, superficially, it pretends to make the somewhat grotesque suggestion that the alteration requested is so complicated and involved, that really, with the best intentions in the world, the Deity does not know how to do it.

An attitude of pious resignation might be taken, —that the central Office knew best what it was about, and that petitions were only worrying. But that would be rather a supine and fatalistic attitude if we were in real distress; and certainly, on a higher level, it would be a very unfilial one. Religious people have been told, on what they generally take to be good authority, that prayer might be a miraculously powerful engine for achievement, even in the physical world, if they would only believe with sufficient vigour; but (I am not here questioning the soundness of their position) they have dramatised or spiritualised away the statement, and act upon it no more.

Influenced it is to be presumed by science, they have come definitely to disbelieve in physical interference of any kind whatever on the part of another order of beings, whether more exalted or more depraved than ourselves; although such beings are frequently mentioned in their sacred books.

Whatever they might be able to do if they chose, for all practical purposes such beings are to the average scientific man purely imaginary, and he feels sure that we can never have experiential knowledge of them or their powers. In his view the universe lies before us for investigation, and, so far as he can see, it is complete without them; it is subject to our own partial control if we are willing patiently to learn how to exercise it, but of any other control, we would say, there is no perceptible trace. Even in the most vital concerns of life, it is the doctor, not the priest, who is summoned: a pestilence is no longer attributed to Divine jealousy, nor would the threshing-floor of Araunah be used to stay it.

The two subjects, moreover, adopt very different modes of expression. The death of an archbishop can be stated scientifically in terms not very different from those appropriate to the stoppage of a clock, or the extinction of a fire; but the religious formula for such an event is that it has pleased God in His infinite wisdom to take to Himself the soul of our dear brother, etc. The very words of such a statement are to modern science

unmeaning. (In saying this, I trust to be understood as not now in the slightest degree attempting to prejudge the question which form is the more appropriate.)

Religion may, in fact, be called supernatural or superscientific, if the term "natural" be limited to that region of which we now believe that we have any direct scientific knowledge.

In disposition also Religion and Science are opposite. Science cultivates a vigorous, adult, intelligent, serpent-like wisdom, and active interference with the course of nature; religion fosters a meek, receptive, child-hearted attitude of dove-like resignation to the Divine will.

Take a scientific man who is a man of science pure and simple, with no element either of a poet, or a philosopher, or a saint, and place him in the atmosphere habitual to the churches,—he must starve. He requires solid food, but his sole provision is air. He requires something to touch and define and know; but all his surroundings are ethereal, indefinable, illimitable, incomprehensible, beautiful, and vague. He dies of inanition.

Take a religious man, who has not a multitude of other aptitudes overlaid upon his religion, into the cold dry workings, the gropings and tunnellings of science, where everything must be scrutinised and proved, distinctly conceived and precisely formulated,—he cannot breathe. He requires ample air and space; whereas he finds himself

underground, among foundations and masonry, very solid and substantial, but completely cabined and confined. He dies of asphyxia.

If a man be able to live in both regions,—to be amphibious as it were,—able to take short flights occasionally, and able to burrow underground occasionally,—accepting the solid work of science and believing its truth, realising the aerial structures of religion, and perceiving their beauty,—will such a man be as happily and powerfully at home in the air as if he had no earth adhering to his wings? Is the modern man as happily and powerfully religious as he might have been with less information about the universe? Or, I would add parenthetically, as he will yet assuredly become, with more?

II

Leaving general considerations, and coming to details, let us look at a few of the simpler religious doctrines, such as are still, I suppose, popularly held in this country.

The creed of the ancient Israelites was well, or at least strikingly, summarised by Prof. Huxley in one of his *Nineteenth Century* articles (March 1886). He there says: "The chief articles of the theological creed of the old Israelites, which are made known to us by the direct evidence of the ancient records, . . . are as remarkable for that which they contain as for that which is absent from them. They reveal a firm conviction that,

when death takes place, a something termed a soul, or spirit, leaves the body and continues to exist in Sheol for a period of indefinite duration, even though there is no proof of any belief in absolute immortality; that such spirits can return to earth to possess and inspire the living; that they are in appearance and in disposition likenesses of the men to whom they belonged, but that, as spirits, they have larger powers and are freer from physical limitations; that they thus form one of a number of kinds of spiritual existence known as Elohim, of whom Jahveh, the national God of Israel, is one; that, consistently with this view, Jahveh was conceived as a sort of spirit, human in aspect and in sense, and with many human passions, but with immensely greater intelligence and power than any other Elohim, whether human or divine."

The mere calm statement of such a creed was plainly held by Huxley to be a sufficient refutation.

But we need not limit ourselves to the Old Testament, some of whose alleged facts may admittedly be abandoned without detriment, as belonging to the legendary or the obscure; we may be constrained by science to go further, and to maintain that even what some regard as fundamental Christian tenets, such as the non-natural Birth, and the non-natural disappearance of the Body from the tomb, have, from the scientific point of view, no reasonable likelihood or proba-

bility whatever. It may be, and often has been, asserted that they appear as childish fancies, appropriate to the infancy of civilisation and a prescientific credulous age; readily intelligible to the historian and student of folk-lore, but not otherwise interesting. The same has been said of every variety of alleged miraculous occurrence, and not merely of such dogmas as the fall of man from an original state of perfection, of the subsequent extirpation of the human race down to a single family, and so on.

The whole historical record, wherever it exceeds the commonplace, every act attributed directly to the Deity—whether it be sending fire from heaven, or writing upon stone, or leadings by cloud and fire, or conversations, whether during trance or otherwise,—is incompatible with the teachings of modern science (let it be clearly remembered how I have defined the phrase "modern science" above); and, when considered prosaically, much of the record is summarily discredited, even by many theologians now. Nor is this acquiescence in negation confined to the leaders. The general religious world has agreed apparently to throw overboard Jonah and the whale, Joshua and the sun, the three Children and the fiery furnace; it does not seem to take anything in the book of Judges or the book of Daniel very seriously; and though it still clings pathetically to the book of Genesis, it is willing to relegate to poetry, and to imaginative myth, such

legends as the Creation of the world, Adam and his rib, Eve and the apple, Noah and his ark, Language and the tower of Babel, Elijah and the chariot of fire, and many others. The stock reconciling phrase, applied to the legend of a six-days' creation or the Levitican mistakes in Natural History—after the strained "day-period" mode of interpretation had been exploded in "Essays and Reviews"—used to be, that the Bible was never meant to teach science; wherefore, whenever it touches upon any branch of natural knowledge, its statements are to be interpreted in a friendly spirit, *i.e.* to be glossed over, and in fact disbelieved. But a book which deals with so prodigious a subject as the origin of all things, and the history of the human race, cannot avoid a treatment of natural facts amounting to a teaching of science, whether such teaching is *meant* or not; and indeed the whole idea involved in the word "meant" is repugnant to the conceptions of biological science, which claims to have ousted teleology from its arena.

Moreover, if religious people go as far as this, where are they to stop? What, then, do they propose to do with the turning of water into wine, events attendant on the ejection of devils, the cursing of the fig-tree, the feeding of five thousand, the raising of Lazarus? Or, to go deeper still, what do they make of the scene at the Baptism, of the Transfiguration, of the signs at the Crucifixion, the Appearances after death, the

Ascension into heaven? On all these points I venture to suggest that neither religion nor science has said its last word.

But it may be urged that even these are but details compared with the one transcendent doctrine of the existence of an omnipotent and omniscient benevolent personal God; the fundamental tenet of nearly all religions. But so far as science has anything to say on this subject, and it has not very much, its tendency is to throw mistrust, not upon the existence of Deity itself, but upon the affixing of Divine attributes. "Infinite" and "eternal" may pass, and "omnipotent" and "omniscient" may reluctantly be permitted to go with them,—these expansive epithets relieve the mind, without expressing more than is implicitly contained in the substantive "God." But concerning "personal" and "benevolent" and other anthropomorphic adjectives, science is exceedingly dubious; nor is omnipotence itself very easily reconcilable with the actual condition of things as we now experience them. The present state of the world is very far short of perfection. Why are things still imperfect if controlled by a benevolent omnipotence? Why, indeed, does evil or pain at all exist? All very ancient puzzles these, but still alive; and the solution to them so far attempted by science lies in the word Evolution,—a word whose applicability to the work of a perfect God may readily be the subject of controversy.

Taught by science, we learn that there has been no fall of man: there has been a rise. Through an apelike ancestry, back through a fishlike and tadpole ancestry, away to the early beginnings of life, the origin of man is being traced by science. There was no specific creation of the world such as was conceived appropriate to a geocentric conception of the universe; the world is a condensation of primeval gas, a congeries of stones and meteors fallen together; still falling together, indeed, in a larger neighbouring mass (the Sun). By the energy of that still persistent falling together, the ether near us is kept constantly agitated, and to the energy of this ethereous agitation all the manifold activity of our planet is due. The whole system has evolved itself from mere moving matter in accordance with the law of gravitation, and there is no certain sign of either beginning or end. Solar systems can by collision or otherwise resolve themselves into nebulæ, and nebulæ left to themselves can condense into solar systems. Everywhere in the spaces around us we see a part of the process going on; the formation of solar systems from whirling nebulæ lies before our eyes, if not in the visible sky itself, yet in the magnified photographs taken of that sky. Even though the whole process of evolution is not completely understood as yet, does anyone doubt that it will become more thoroughly understood in time? And if anyone does doubt it, would he

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hope effectively to bolster up religion by such a doubt?

It is difficult to resist yielding to the bent and trend of "modern science," as well as to its proved conclusions. Its bent and trend may have been wrongly estimated by its present disciples: a large tract of knowledge may have been omitted from its ken, which when included will revolutionise some of their speculative opinions; but, however this may be, there can be no doubt about the tendency of orthodox science at the present time. It suggests to us that the Cosmos is self-explanatory, self-contained, and self-maintaining. From everlasting to everlasting the material universe rolls on, composing worlds and disintegrating them, producing vegetable beauty and destroying it, evolving intelligent animal life, developing that into a self-conscious human race, and then plunging it once more into annihilation.

> "Thou makest thine appeal to me!
> I bring to life, I bring to death,
> The spirit does but mean the breath,
> I know no more. . . ."

But at this point the theologian happily and eagerly interposes, with a crucial inquiry of science about this same bringing to life. Granted that the blaze of the sun accounts for winds and waves, and hail, and rain, and rivers, and all the myriad activities of the earth, does it account for life? Has it accounted for the life of the lowest animal, the tiniest plant, the simplest cell, hardly

visible but yet self-moving, in the field of a microscope?

And science, in chagrin, has to confess that hitherto in this direction it has failed. It has not yet witnessed the origin of the smallest trace of life from dead matter: all life, so far as has been watched, proceeds from antecedent life. Given the life of a single cell, science would esteem itself competent ultimately to trace its evolution into all the myriad existences of plant and animal and man; but the origin of protoplasmic activity itself as yet eludes it. But will the Theologian triumph in the admission? will he therein detect at last a dam which shall stem the torrent of scepticism? will he base an argument for the direct action of the Deity in mundane affairs on that failure, and entrench himself behind that present incompetence of labouring men? If so, he takes his stand on what may prove a yielding foundation. The present powerlessness of science to explain or originate life is a convenient weapon wherewith to fell a pseudo-scientific antagonist who is dogmatising too loudly out of bounds; but it is not perfectly secure as a permanent support. In an early stage of civilisation it may have been supposed that flame only proceeded from antecedent flame,—but the tinder-box and the lucifer-match were invented nevertheless. Theologians have probably learnt by this time that their central tenets should not be founded, even partially, upon nescience, or upon negations of any kind; lest the

placid progress of positive knowledge should once more undermine their position, and another discovery have to be scouted with alarmed and violent anathemas.

Any year, or any century, the physical aspect of the nature of life may become more intelligible, and may perhaps resolve itself into an action of already known forces on the very complex molecule of protoplasm. Already, in Germany, have inorganic and artificial substances been found to crawl about on glass slides, under the action of surface-tension or capillarity, with an appearance which is said to have deceived even a biologist into hastily pronouncing them living amœbæ. Life in its ultimate elements and on its material side is such a simple thing, it is but a slight extension of known chemical and physical forces; the cell must be able to respond to stimuli, to assimilate outside materials, and to subdivide. I apprehend that there is not a biologist but believes (perhaps quite erroneously) that sooner or later the discovery will be made, and that a cell discharging all the essential functions of life will be constructed out of inorganic material. Seventy years ago organic chemistry was the chemistry of vital products,—of compounds that could not be made artificially by man. Now there is no such chemistry; the name persists, but its meaning has changed.

It may be conceivably argued that after all *we* are alive, and that if we ever learn how to make animals or plants, they, as our creation, will

originate from preexistent life; just as when we make new species by artificial selection we exert a control over the forces of nature which may have some remote likeness to Divine control. And this may be a theme capable of enlargement.

But meanwhile what do we mean by such a phrase as "Divine control"? For, after all, the controversy between religion and science is not so much a controversy as to the being or not being of a God. Science might be willing to concede His existence, as a vague and ineffective hypothesis, but there would still remain a question as to His mode of action, a controversy as to the method of the Divine government of the world.

And this is the standing controversy, by no means really dead at the present day. Is the world controlled by a living Person, accessible to prayer, influenced by love, able and willing to foresee, to intervene, to guide, and wistfully to lead without compulsion spirits that are in some sort akin to Himself?

Or is the world a self-generated, self-controlling machine, complete and fully organised for movement, either up or down, for progress or degeneration, according to the chances of heredity and the influence of environment? Has the world, as it were, *secreted* or arrived at life and mind and consciousness by the play of natural forces acting on the complexities of highly developed molecular aggregates; at first life-cells, ultimately brain-cells; and these not the organ or instrument,

but the very reality and essence, of life and of mind?

If there be any other orders of conscious existence in the universe, as probably there are, are they also locked up on their several planets, without the power of communicating or helping or informing, and all working out their own destiny in permanent isolation? Everything in such a world would be, not only apparently but really, a definite sequence of cause and effect; just as it seems to us here. And prayer, to be effectual in such a world, must be not what theologians mean by prayer, but must be either simple meditation for acquiescence in the inevitable, or else a petition addressed to some other of the dwellers in our time and place, that they may be induced by benevolent acts to ease some of the burdens to which their petitioners are liable.

We thus return to our original thesis, that the root question or outstanding controversy between science and faith rests upon two distinct conceptions of the universe:—the one, that of a self-contained and self-sufficient universe, with no outlook into or links with anything beyond, uninfluenced by any life or mind except such as is connected with a visible and tangible material body; and the other conception, that of a universe lying open to all manner of spiritual influences, permeated through and through with a Divine spirit, guided and watched by living minds, acting through the medium of law indeed, but with in-

telligence and love behind the law: a universe by no means self-sufficient or self-contained, but with sensitive tendrils groping into another supersensuous order of existence, where reign laws hitherto unimagined by science, but laws as real and as mighty as those by which the material universe is governed.

"For nothing is that errs from law."

According to the one conception, faith is childish and prayer absurd; the only individual immortality lies in the memory of descendants; benevolence and cheerful acquiescence in fate are the highest religious attributes possible; and the future of the human race is determined by the law of gravitation and the circumstances of space.

According to the other conception, prayer may be mighty to the removal of mountains, and by faith we may feel ourselves citizens of an eternal and glorious cosmogony of mutual help and cooperation,—advancing from lowly stages to ever higher states of happy activity, world without end,—and may catch in anticipation some glimpse of that "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

The whole controversy hinges, in one sense, on a practical pivot—the efficacy of prayer. Is prayer to hypothetical and supersensuous beings as senseless and useless as it is "unscientific"? Or does prayer pierce through the husk and apparent covering of the sensuous universe,

and reach something living, loving, and helpful beyond?

And in another sense the controversy turns upon a question of fact. Do we live in a universe permeated with life and mind: life and mind independent of matter and unlimited in individual duration? Or is life limited, in space to the surface of planetary masses, and in time to the duration of the material envelope essential to its manifestation?

The answer is given in one way by orthodox modern science, and in another way by Religion of all times; and until these opposite answers are made consistent, the reconciliation between Science and Faith is incomplete.

CHAPTER II

THE RECONCILIATION

III

IT may or may not have been observed, by anyone who has read the previous chapter,—but in so far as it has been missed, the whole meaning has been misconceived,—that when speaking of the atmosphere or the conclusions, the doctrines or the tendency, of "science," I was careful always to explain that I meant orthodox or present-day science; meaning not the comprehensive grasp of a Newton, but science as now interpreted by its recognised official exponents,—by the average Fellow of the Royal Society for instance. Just as by "faith" I intended not the ecstatic insight aroused in a seer by some momentary revelation, but the ordinary workaday belief of the average enlightened theologian. And my thesis was that the attitudes of mind appropriate to these two classes were at present fundamentally diverse; that there was still an outstanding controversy, or ground for controversy, between science and faith, although active fighting has been suspended, and although all bitterness has passed from the

conflict, let us hope never to return. But the diversity remains, and for the present it is better so, if it has not yet achieved its work. The conflict has been in many respects useful, and it would be far from well to attempt to bring it to a close prematurely. But there must be an end to it some time; reconciliation is bound to lie somewhere in the future; no two parts or aspects of the Universe can permanently and really be discordant. The only question is where the meeting-place may be; whether it is nearest to the orthodox faith, or to the orthodox science, of the present day. This question is the subject of the present Chapter, which is a sequel to the preceding. Let me, greatly daring, presume to enter upon an inquiry into what is really true and essential in the opposing creeds, how much of each has its origin in over-hasty assumption or fancy, and how far the opposing views are merely a natural consequence of imperfect vision of opposite sides of the same veil.

First among the truths that will have to be accepted by both sides, we may take the reign of Law, sometimes called the Uniformity of Nature. The discovery of uniformity must be regarded as mainly the work of Science: it did not come by revelation. In moments of inspiration it was glimpsed,—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,"—but the glimpse was only momentary, the Hebrew "atmosphere" was saturated with the mists of cataclysm, visible

judgments, and conspicuous interferences. We used to be told that the Creator's methods were adapted to the stage of His creatures, and varied from age to age: that it was really His actions, and not their mode of regarding them, that varied. The doctrine of uniformity first took root and grew in scientific soil.

At first sight this doctrine of uniformity excludes Divine control: and "evolution" seems to proceed still further in the direction of excluding everything in the nature of personal will, of intention, of guidance, of adaptation, of management; it shows that things change and how they change, and it attempts to show why they change. The Darwinian form of it attempts to account for the origin of species by inevitable necessity, free from artificial selection or operations analogous to those of the breeder. The old Teleology has gone, and guidance and purpose appear to have gone with it.

At first sight, but at first sight only. So might an observer, inspecting some great and perfect factory, with machines constantly weaving patterns, some beautiful, some ugly, conclude, or permit himself to dream at least—after some hours' watching, during which everything proceeded without a hitch, driven as it were by inexorable fate—that everything went of itself, controlled by cold dreary necessity. And if his scrutiny could be continued for weeks or years, and it still presented the same aspect, his dream

would begin to seem to be true: the perfection of mechanism would weary the spectator: his human weakness would long for something to go wrong, so that someone from an upper office might step down and set it right again. Humanity is accustomed to such interventions and breaks in a ceaseless sequence, and, when no such breaks and interventions occur, it is liable to conclude hastily that the scheme is self-originating, self-sustained,—that it works to no ultimate and foreseen destiny.

So sometimes, looking at the east end of London, or many another only smaller city, has the feeling of despair seized men: they wonder what it can all mean. So, on the other hand, looking at the loom of nature, has the feeling, not of despair, but of what has been called atheism, one ingredient of atheism, arisen: atheism never fully realised, and wrongly so-called. Recently it has been called severe Theism indeed; for it is joyful sometimes, interested and placid always, exultant at the strange splendour of the spectacle which its intellect has laid bare to contemplation, satisfied with the perfection of the mechanism, content to be a part of the self-generated organism, and endeavouring to think that the feelings of duty, of earnest effort, and of faithful service, which conspicuously persist in spite of all discouragement, are on this view intelligible as well as instinctive, and sure that nothing less than

unrepining, unfaltering, unswerving acquiescence is worthy of our dignity as man.

The law of evolution not only studies change and progress, it seeks to trace sequences back to antecedents: it strains after the origin of all things. But ultimate origins are inscrutable. Let us admit, as scientific men, that of real origin, even of the simplest thing, we know nothing; not even of a pebble. Sand is the debris of rocks, and fresh rocks can be formed of compacted sand; but this suggests infinity, not origin. Infinity is non-human and we shrink from it, yet what else can there be in space? And if in space, why not in time also? Much might be said here perhaps, but let it pass. We must admit that science knows nothing of ultimate origins. Which first, the hen or the egg? is a trivial form of a very real puzzle. That the world, in the sense of this planet, this homely lump of matter we call the earth—that this had an origin, a history, a past, intelligible more or less, growingly intelligible to the eye of science, is true enough. The date when it was molten may be roughly estimated; the manner and mechanism of the birth of the moon has been guessed: the earth and moon then *originated* in one sense; before that they were part of a nebula, like the rest of the solar system; and some day the solar system may again be part of a nebula, in consequence of collision with some at present tremendously

distant mass. But all that is nothing to the Universe; nothing even to the visible universe. The collisions there take place every now and again before our eyes. The Universe is full of lumps of matter of every imaginable size: the history of a solar system may be written—its birth and also its death, separated perhaps by millions of millions of years; but what of that? It is but an episode, a moment in the eternal cosmogony, and the eye of history looks to what happened before the birth and after the death of any particular aggregate; just as a child may trace the origin and the destruction of a soap bubble, the form of which is evanescent, the material of which is permanent.

While the soap bubble lived it was the scene of much beauty, and of a kind of law and order impossible to the mere water and soap out of which it was made, and into which again it has collapsed. The history of the soap bubble can be written, but there is a before and an after. So it is with the solar system; so with any assigned collocation of matter in the universe. No point in space can be thought of "at which if a man stand it shall be impossible for him to cast a javelin into the beyond"; nor can any epoch be conceived in time at which the mind will not instantly and automatically inquire, "and what before," or "what after"?

Yet does the human mind pine for something finite: it longs for a beginning, even if it could

dispense with an end. It has tried of late to imagine that the law of dissipation of energy was a heaven-sent message, revealing the finite duration of the Universe; so that before everything was, it could seek a Great First Cause · and after everything had been, could take refuge once more in Him.

Seen more closely, these are childish notions. They would give no real help if they were true; they cannot be true, any more than other fairy tales suitable for children.

In the dawn of civilisation God "walked in the garden in the cool of the day." Down to say the middle of the nineteenth century He brought things into existence by a creative *Fiat*, and looked on His work for a time with approbation; only to step down and destroy a good deal of it before many years had elapsed, and then to patch it up and try to mend it from time to time.

All very human: the endless rumble of the machinery is distressing, perfection is intolerable. Still more intolerable is imperfection not attended to; the machinery groans, lacks oil, shows signs of wear, some of the fabrics it is weaving are hideous; why, why, does no one care? Surely the manager will before long step down and put one of the looms to rights, or scold a workman, or tell us what it is all for, and why he needs the woven fabric, *der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid.*

We see that he does not now interfere, not

even when things go very wrong; the "hands" are left to put things right as best they can, nothing mysterious ever happens now, it is all commonplace and semi-intelligible; we ourselves could easily throw a machine out of gear; we do, sometimes. We ourselves, if we are clever enough and patient enough, could even perform the far harder task of putting one right again; we could even suggest fresh patterns; we seem to be more than onlookers—as musicians and artists we can create—perhaps we are foremen; and if ideas occur to us, why should we not throw them into the common stock? There is no head manager at all, this thing has been always running; as the hands die off, others take their places; they have not been selected or appointed to the job; they are only here as the fittest of a large number of whom they alone survive; even the looms seem to have a self-mending, self-regenerative power. And we ourselves—we are not looking at it or assisting in it for long; when we go, other brilliantly endowed and inventive spectators or helpers will take our places. We understand the whole arrangement now; it is simpler than at first we thought.

Is it, then, so simple? Does the uniformity and the eternity and the self-sustainedness of it make it the easier to understand? Are we so sure that the guidance and control are not really continuous, instead of being, as we expected, intermittent? May we be not looking at the

working of the Manager all the time, and at nothing else? Why should He step down and interfere with Himself?

That is the lesson science has to teach theology —to look for the action of the Deity, if at all, then always; not in the past alone, nor only in the future, but equally in the present. If His action is not visible now, it never will be, and never has been visible.

Shall we look for it in toy eruptions in the West Indies? As well look for it in the fall of a child's box of bricks! Shall we hope to see the Deity some day step out of Himself and display His might or His love or some other attribute? We can see Him now if we look; if we cannot see, it is only that our eyes are shut.

"Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands or feet":—

poetry, yes—but also science; the real trend and meaning of Science, whether of orthodox "science" or not.

IV

There is nothing new in Pantheism:—indeed no! But there are different kinds of pantheism. That the All is a manifestation, a revelation of God,—that it is in a manner, a dim and ungraspable manner, in some sort God Himself,—may be readily granted; but what does the All include? It were a strange kind of All that

included mountains and trees, the forces of nature, and the visible material universe only, and excluded the intelligence, the will, the emotions, the individuality or personality, of which we ourselves are immediately conscious. Shall we possess these things and God not possess them? That would be no pantheism at all. Any power, any love, of which we ourselves are conscious does thereby certainly exist; and so it must exist in highly intensified and nobler form in the totality of things,—unless we make the grotesque assumption that in all the infinite universe we denizens of planet Earth are the highest. Let no worthy human attribute be denied to the Deity. In Anthropomorphism there are many errors, but there is one truth. Whatever worthy attribute belongs to man, be it personality or any other, its existence in the Universe is thereby admitted: it belongs to the All.

The only conceivable way of denying personality, and effort, and failure, and renewed effort, and consciousness, and love, and hate too, for that matter, in the real *whole* of things, is to regard them as illusory,—physiological and purely subjective sensations in ourselves. Even so, they are in some sense *there*; they are not unreal, however they are to be accounted for. We must blink nothing; evolution is a truth, a strange and puzzling truth; "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together"; and the most

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perfect of all the sons of men, the likest God this planet ever saw, he to whom many look for their idea of what God is, surely he taught us that suffering, and sacrifice, and wistful yearning for something not yet attainable, were not to be regarded as human attributes alone.

Must we not admit the evil attributes also? In the Whole, yes; but one of our experiences is that there are grades of existence. We recognise that in ourselves the ape and tiger are dying out, that the germs of higher faculties have made their appearance; it is an intensification of the higher that we may infer in the more advanced grades of existence; intensification of the lower lies behind and beneath us.

The inference or deduction of some of the attributes of Deity, from that which we can recognise as "the likest God within the soul," is a legitimate deduction, if properly carried out; and it is in close correspondence with the methods of physical science. It has been said that from the properties of a drop of water the possibility of a Niagara or an Atlantic might be inferred by a man who had seen or heard of neither.[1] And it is true that by experiment on a small quantity of water a man with the brain of Newton and the mathematical power and knowledge of Lord Rayleigh could deduce by pure reasoning most if not all of the inorganic phenomena of an ocean; and that not vaguely

[1] Sir Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet.*

but definitely; the existence of waves on its surface, the rate at which they would travel as dependent upon distance from crest to crest, their maximum height, their length as depending on depth of sea; the existence of ripples also, going at a different pace and following a different law; the breaking of waves upon a shore; the tides also; the ocean currents caused by inequalities of temperature, and many other properties which are realised in an actual ocean:—not as topographical realities indeed, but as necessary theoretical consequences of the hypothetical existence of so great a mass of water. Reasoning from the small to the great is legitimate reasoning, notwithstanding that, by increase of size, phenomena wholly different and at first sight unexpected come into being. No one not a mathematician looking at a drop of water could infer the Atlantic billows or the tides: but they are all there in embryo, given gravitation; and yet not there in actuality in even the smallest degree. People sometimes think that increase of size is mere magnification, and introduces no new property. They are mistaken. Waves *could* not be on a drop, nor tides either, nor waterspouts, nor storms. The simple fact that the earth is *large* makes it retain an atmosphere; and the existence of an atmosphere enhances the importance of a globe beyond all comparison, and fits it for plant and animal life. The simple fact that the sun is *very* large makes it

hot, *i.e.* enables it to generate heat, and so fits it to be the centre and source of energy to worlds of habitable activity.

To suppose that the deduction of divine attributes by intensification of our own attributes must necessarily result in a "magnified non-natural man" is to forget these facts of physical science. If the reasoning is bad, or the data insufficient, the result is worthless, but the method is legitimate, though far from easy; and it is hardly to be expected that the science of theology can yet have had its Newton, or even its Copernicus.[1] At present it is safest to walk by faith and inspiration; and it is the saint and prophet rather than the theologian whom humanity would prefer to trust.

V

Now let us go back to our groping inquiry —to the series of questions left unanswered in the latter portion of Chapter I. (pp. 21–24), and ask, what then of prayer, regarded

[1] Theologians may differ from this estimate; and if so, I defer to their opinion. It is well known that the topics slightly glanced at in the first half of this section have been profoundly studied by them; but the subject is so difficult that we can hardly assume that as much progress has been made in Theology as in the natural sciences. Not so much progress has been made even in the biological sciences as in the more specifically physical. It is sometimes said that biology has had its Newton, but it is not so: Darwin was its Copernicus, and revolutionised ideas as the era of Copernicus did. Newton did not revolutionise ideas: his was a synthetic and deductive era.

scientifically; of miracle, if we like to call it miracle; of the region not only of emotion and intelligence, but of active work, guidance, and interference? Are these, after all, so rigorously excluded by the reign of law? Are not these also parts of its kingdom? Shall law apply only to the inorganic and the inanimate? Shall it not rule the domain of life and of mind too? Speaking or thinking of the Universe, we must exclude no part;

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body nature is, and God the soul."

> "For as the reasonable soul and human flesh is one man,"

so God and man constitute a unity,—a unity characterised by moral freedom in accordance with law.

Let us take this question of *guidance*. We must see it in action now or never. Do we see it now? Orthodox theology vaguely assumes it; orthodox science sees it not at all. What is the truth? Is the blindness of science subjective or objective? Is the vision absent because there is nothing to see, or because we have shut our eyes, and have declined to contemplate a region of dim and misty fact?

Take the origin of species by the persistence of favourable variations: how is the appearance of those same favourable variations accounted for? Except by artificial selection, not at all. Given their appearance, their development by struggle and inheritance and survival can be

explained; but that they arose spontaneously, by random change without purpose, is an assertion which cannot be justified. Does anyone think that the skill of the beaver, the instinct of the bee, the genius of a man, arose by chance, and that its presence is accounted for by handing down and by survival? What struggle for existence will explain the advent of Beethoven? What pitiful necessity for earning a living as a dramatist will educe for us Shakespeare? These things are beyond science of the orthodox type; then let it be silent and deny nothing in the Universe till it has at least made an honest effort to comprehend the whole.

Genius, however, science *has* made an effort not wholly to ignore; but take other human faculties—Premonition, Inspiration, Clairvoyance, Telepathy—what is the meaning of these things? Orthodox science refuses to contemplate them; orthodox theology also looks at some of them askance. Many philosophers have relegated them to the region of the unconscious, or the subconscious, where things of nothing worth are supposed to dwell. A few Psychologists are beginning to attend.

Men of religion can hold aloof or not as they please: it is certainly wise to be cautious until the scientific basis of these things has been rendered more secure. At present they are beyond the pale of "science," but some of them are inside the Universe of fact,—all of them,

as I now begin to believe,—and their meaning must be extracted. So long as this region is ignored, dogmatic "science" should be silent. It has a right to its own adopted region, it has no right to be heard outside. It cannot see guidance, it cannot recognise the meaning of the whole trend of things,—the constant leadings, the control, the help, the revelations, the beckonings,—beyond our normal bodily and mental powers? No, for it will not look. What becomes of an intelligence which has left this earth? Whence comes the nascent intelligence which arrives? What is the meaning of our human personality and individuality? Did we spring into existence a few years ago? Do we cease to exist a few years hence? It does not know. It does not want to know.

Does theology seek enlightenment any more energetically? No; it is satisfied with its present information, which some people mistake for divine knowledge, about these subjects. Divine knowledge is perhaps not obtained so easily.

At present, in the cosmic scheme, we strangely draw the line at man. We know of every grade of animal life from the amœba upwards,—with some slight hiatus here and there,—the lowest being single cells indistinguishable from plants; but the series terminates with man. From man the scale of existence is supposed to step to God. Is it not somewhat sudden? The total descent from man to the amœba is an incomparably

smaller interval. Yet that is a deep declivity; profound, but not infinite. Why this sudden jump from the altitude of man into infinity? Are there no intermediate states of existence?

Perhaps on other planets.—Yes, bodily existence on other planets is probable; not necessarily on any planet of our solar system, but that is a trifle in the visible universe,—it is as our little five-roomed house among all the dwellings of mankind. But why on other planets only? Why bodily existence only? Why think solely of those incarnate personalities from whom, by the exigencies of place, we are most isolated? Because we feel more akin to such, and we know of no others. A good answer so far, and a true. But do we wish to learn? Have we our minds open? A few men of science have adduced evidence of intelligence not wholly inaccessible and yet not familiarly accessible,—intelligence perhaps a part of ourselves, perhaps a part of others,—intelligence which seems closely connected with the region of genius, of telepathy, of clairvoyance, to which I have above briefly referred.

Suppose for a moment that there were a God. Science has never really attempted to deny His existence. Conceive a scientific God. How would He work? Surely not by speech or by intermittent personal interference. He would be in, and among, and of, the whole scheme of things. The universe is governed by law; effect

is connected with cause[1]; if a thing moves it is because something moves it[2]; effects are due and only due directly to agents. If there be guidance or control, it must be by agents that it is exerted. Then what in the scheme of things would be His agents?

Surely among such agents we must recognise ourselves. We can at least consider how we and other animals work. Watch the bird teaching its young to fly, the mother teaching a child to read, the statesman nursing the destiny of a new-born nation. Is there no guidance there?

What is the meaning of legislation and municipal government, and acts of reform, and all the struggle after better lives for ourselves and others? Pure automatism, say some; an illusion of free will. Possibly; but even a dream is not a nonentity,—the belief in free will has more than justified itself in practice;—the effort, however it be expressed or accounted for, exists.

What is all the effort—regarded scientifically—but the action of the totality of things trying to improve itself, striving still to evolve something higher, holier, and happier, out of an inchoate mass? There may be many other ways of regarding it; but this is one. Failures, mistakes, sins,—yes, they exist; evolution would be meaningless if perfection were already attained; but surely even now we see some progress, surely

[1] If this involves controversy, then sequent with antecedent.

[2] This I wish to maintain in spite of controversy.

the effort of our saints is bearing fruit. This planet has laboured long and patiently for the advent of a human race; for millions of years it was the abode of strange beasts, and now recently it has become the abode of man. What but imperfection would you expect? May it not be suggested that conscious evil or sin looms rather large in our eyes, oppresses us with a somewhat exaggerated sense of its cosmic importance, because it is peculiarly characteristic of the *human* stage of development: the lower animals know little or nothing of it. They may indeed do things which in men would be sinful; but that is just what sin is — reversion to a lower type after perception of a higher. The consciousness of crime, the active pursuit of degradation, does not arise till something like human intelligence is reached; and only a little higher up it ceases again. It appears to be a stage rather rapidly passed through in the cosmic scheme. Greed, for instance, greed in the widest sense, accumulation for accumulation's sake,— it is a human defect, and one responsible for much misery to-day; but it arose with civilisation, and already it is felt to be below the standard of the race. A stage very little above present humanity, not at all above the higher grades of present humanity, and we shall be free from it again.

Let us be thankful we have got thus far, and struggle on a little farther. It is our destiny,

and whether here or elsewhere it will be accomplished.

We are active agents, visible and tangible agents, and we can help; we ourselves can answer some kinds of prayer, so it be articulate; we ourselves can interfere with the course of inanimate nature, can make waste places habitable, and habitable places waste. Not by breaking laws do we ever influence nature—we cannot break a law of nature, it is not brittle, we only break ourselves if we try—but by obeying them. In accordance with law we have to act, but act we can and do, and through us acts the Deity.

And perhaps not alone through us. We are the highest bodily organisms on this material planet, and the material control of it belongs to us; it is subject to the laws of Physics and to the laws of our minds operating through our bodies. If there are other beings near us they do not normally trespass. It is our sphere, so far as Physics are concerned. Of any exceptions to this statement stringent proof must be forthcoming.

Assertions are made that under comparatively rare conditions *physical* interference does occur; but there is always a person of unusual type present when these things happen, and until we know more of the power of the unconscious human personality, it is simplest to assume that these physical acts are due, whether consciously, or unconsciously, to that person.

But what about our mental acts? We can operate on each other's minds through our physical envelope, by speech and writing and in other ways, but we can do more: it appears that we can operate at a distance, without apparent aid from physical organ or medium; if by mechanism at all, then by mechanism at present unknown to us.

Supposing, then, that we are open to influence from each other, by non-corporeal methods, may we not be open also to influence from beings belonging to another order? And if so, may we not be aided, inspired, guided, by a cloud of witnesses,—not witnesses only, but helpers, agents like ourselves of the immanent God?

How do we know that in the mental sphere these cannot answer prayer, as we in the physical? It is not a speculation only, it is a question for experience to decide. Are we conscious of guidance; do we feel that prayers are answered? that power to do, and to will, and to think, is given us? Many there are who with devout thankfulness will say yes.

They attribute it to the Deity. So can we attribute everything to the Deity, from thunder and lightning down to daily bread; but is it direct action? Does He not distribute the work among agents? That is what analogy suggests, but it is difficult to discriminate; and fortunately it is not necessary; the whole is linked together,

"Bound by gold chains about the feet of God,"

and through it all His energising Spirit runs. On any hypothesis it must be to the Lord that we pray — to the highest we know or can conceive; but the answer shall come in ways we know not of, and there must always be a far Higher than ever we can conceive.

Religious people seem to be losing some of their faith in prayer: they think it scientific not to pray in the sense of simple petition. They may be right: it may be the highest attitude never to ask for anything specific, only for acquiescence. If saints feel it so, they are doubtless right, but, so far as ordinary science has anything to say to the contrary, a more childlike attitude might turn out truer, more in accordance with the total scheme. Prayer for a fancied good that might really be an injury, would be foolish; prayer for breach of law would be not foolish only but profane; but who are we to dogmatise too positively concerning law? A martyr may have prayed that he should not feel the fire. Can it be doubted that, whether through what we call hypnotic suggestion or by some other means, anæsthesia was at least possible? Prayer, we have been told, is a mighty engine of achievement; but we have ceased to believe it. Why should we be so incredulous? Even in medicine, for instance, it is not really absurd to suggest that drugs and no prayer may be almost as foolish as prayer and no

drugs.[1] Mental and physical are interlocked. The crudities of "faith-healing" have a germ of truth, perhaps as much truth as can be claimed by those who contemn them. How do we know that each is not ignoring one side, that each is but half educated, each only adopting half measures? The whole truth may be completer and saner than the sectaries dream: more things may be

"wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."

We are not bodies alone, nor spirits alone, but both; our bodies isolate us, our spirits unite us. We are not as isolated as we appear. As islands are all based upon a common ground, so we may be likened to floating lonely icebergs, our crests above the ocean, with deeply submerged portions united by the sea.

The conscious part is knowing, the subconscious part seems ignorant: yet the subconscious

[1] Diseases are like weeds; gardening is a bacteriological problem. Some bacteria are good and useful and necessary; they act in digestion, in wounds, in soil; others are baleful and mean disease. The gardener, like the physician, has to cultivate the plants and eradicate the weeds. If he ignores the existence of weeds and says they are all plants, he speaks truth as a botanist, but is not a practical gardener. If he says, "Gardening is all effort on my part, and nothing comes from the sky, I will dig and I will water, I care not for casual rain or for sun," he errs foolishly on one side. If he says, "The sun and the rain do everything, there is no need for my exertion," he errs on the other side, and errs more dangerously; because he *can* abstain from action, whereas he cannot exclude rain and sun, however much he presumes to ignore them. He ought to be a part of the agency at work. Sobriety and sanity consist in recognising all the operative causes—spiritual, mental, and material.

can achieve results the conscious can by no means either understand or perform. Witness the physical operations of "suggestion" and the occasional lucidity of trance.

Each one of us has a great region of the subconscious, to which we do not and need not attend: only let us not deny it, let us not cut ourselves off from its sustaining power. If we have instinct for worship, for prayer, for communion with saints or with Deity, let us trust that instinct; for there lies part of the realm of religion. We may try to raise the subconscious region into the light of day, and study it with our intellect also; but let us not assume that our present conscious intelligence is already so well informed that its knowledge exhausts or determines or bounds the region of the true and the possible.

VI

As to what is scientifically possible or impossible, anything not self-contradictory or inconsistent with other truth is *possible.* In view of our present scientific ignorance, and in spite of the extract from Professor Tyndall quoted on page 7 above, this statement must be accepted as literally true, for all we know to the contrary. There may be reasons why certain things do not occur: our experience tells us that they do not, and we may judge that there is some reason why they do not. There may be an adaptation,

an arrangement among the forces of nature—the forces of nature in their widest sense—which enchains them and screens us from their destructive action; after the same sort of fashion as the atmosphere screens the earth from the furious meteoric buffeting it would otherwise encounter on its portentous journey through ever new and untried depths of space.[1]

We may indeed be well protected; we must, else we should not be here. But as to what is *possible*—think of any lower creature, low enough in the scale of existence to ignore us, and to treat us, too, as among the forces of nature; and then let us bethink ourselves of how we may appear, not indeed to an infinite Being, but to some personal intelligence high above us in the scale of existence. Consider a colony of ants, and conceive them conscious at their level: what know they of fate and of the future? Much what we know. They may think themselves governed by uniform law—uniform, that is, even to their understanding—the march of the seasons, the struggle for existence, the weight of the soil, the properties of matter as they encounter it,—no more. For centuries things may have continued thus; when one day, quite unexpectedly, a shipwrecked sailor strolling round kicks their ant-hill over. To and fro they run, overwhelmed

[1] The earth does not describe anything like a closed curve per annum; the sun advances more than ten miles per second, in what is practically a straight line.

with the catastrophe. What shall hinder his crushing them with his heel? *Laborare est orare* in their case. Let him watch them and see, or fancy that he sees, in their movements the signs of industry, of system, of struggle against untoward circumstance; let him note the moving of eggs, the trying to save and to repair: — destruction may by that means be averted.

Just as our earth is midway among the lumps of matter, neither small like a meteoric stone, nor gigantic like a sun, so may be the place we, the human race, occupy in the scale of existence. All our ordinary views are based on the notion that we are the highest in the scale; upset that notion and anything is possible. Possible, but we have to ascertain the facts: not what might, but what does occur. Into the lives of the lower creatures caprice assuredly seems to enter; the treatment of a fly by a child is capricious, and may be regarded as puzzling to the fly. As we rise in the scale of existence we hope that things get better; we have experience that they do. It may be said that up to a point in the scale of life, vice and caprice increase; that the lower organisms and the plant world know nothing of them, and that only man has been consciously wicked. But wickedness reaches a maximum at a certain stage—a stage the best of the human race have already passed—and we need not postulate either vice or caprice in our superiors. Men have

thought themselves the sport of the gods before now, but let us hope they were mistaken: such thoughts would lead to madness and despair. We do not know the laws which govern the interaction of different orders of intelligence, nor do we know how much may depend on our own attitude and conduct. It may be that prayer is an instrument which can influence higher agencies, and that by its neglect we are losing the aid of an engine of help for our lives and for the lives of others.

The Universe is huge and awful every way, we might so easily be crushed by it; we need the help of every agency available, and if we had no helpers we should stand a poor chance. The loneliness of it when we leave the planet would be appalling; sometimes even here the loneliness is great.

What the "protecting atmosphere" for our discarnate souls may be, I know not. Some may liken the protection to the care of a man for a dog, of a woman for a child, of a far-seeing statesman for a race of bewildered slaves; while others may dash aside the contemplation of all intermediate agencies, and feel themselves safe and enfolded in the protecting love of God Himself.

The region of true Religion and the region of a completer Science are one.

CHAPTER III

RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND MIRACLE

I. Science and Religion

THERE was a time when religious people distrusted the increase of knowledge, and condemned the mental attitude which takes delight in its pursuit; being in dread lest part of the foundation of their faith should be undermined by a too ruthless and unqualified spirit of investigation.

There has been a time when men engaged in the quest of systematic knowledge had an idea that the results of their studies would be destructive not only of outlying accretions but of essential portions of the edifice of religion which has been gradually erected by the prophets and saints of humanity.

Both these epochs will soon belong to history. Thoughtful men realise that truth is the important thing, and that shelter in any refuge less substantial than the truth would render them liable to abject exposure when a storm comes on. Few are not aware that it is a sign of unbalanced judgment to conclude, on the strength of a few momentous discoveries, that the whole structure

of religious belief, built up through the ages by the developing human race from fundamental emotions and instincts and experiences, is unsubstantial and insecure.

The business of Science—including in that term, for present purposes, philosophy and the science of criticism—is with foundations; the business of Religion is with superstructure. Science has laboriously laid a solid foundation of great strength, and its votaries have rejoiced over it; though their joy must perforce be somewhat dumb and inexpressive until the more vocal apostles of art and literature and music are able to decorate it with their lighter and more winsome tracery. So for the present the structure of science strikes a stranger as severe and forbidding.

In a neighbouring territory Religion occupies a splendid building—a gorgeously-decorated palace; concerning which, Science, not having yet discerned a satisfactory basis, is sometimes inclined to suspect that it is phantasmal and mainly supported on legend.

It must be admitted that the foundation and the superstructure, as at present known, are inadequately fitted together; and that there is, in consequence, an apparent dislocation. Men of science have exclaimed that all solid truth is in their keeping: adopting in that sense the adage of the poet,

> "To the solid ground
> Of Nature trusts the mind which builds for aye."

On the other hand, men of Religion, snugly ensconced in their traditional eyrie,—disturbed only by the digging and the hammering below,—have shuddered as the artificial props and pillars by which they supposed it to be buttressed gave way one after another; and have doubted whether they could continue to enjoy peace in their exalted home if it turned out that part of it was suspended in air, without any perceptible foundation at all, like the phantom city in "Gareth and Lynette" whereof it could be said:

> "the city is built
> To music, therefore never built at all.
> And therefore built for ever."

Remarks as to lack of solid foundation may be regarded as typical of the mild kind of sarcasm which people with a superficial smattering of popular science sometimes try to pour upon religion. They think that to accuse a system of being devoid of solid foundation is equivalent to denying its stability. On the contrary, as Tennyson no doubt perceived, the absence of anything that may crumble or decay, or be shaken by an earthquake, is a safeguard rather than a danger. It is the absence of material foundation that makes the Earth itself, for instance, so secure. If it were based upon a pedestal, or otherwise solidly supported, we might be anxious about the stability and durability of the support. As it is, it floats securely in the emptiness of space.

Similarly the persistence of its diurnal spin is secured by the absence of anything to stop it: not by any maintaining mechanism.

To say that a system does not rest upon one special fact is not to impugn its stability. The body of scientific truth rests on no solitary material fact or group of facts, but on a basis of harmony and consistency between facts: its support and ultimate sanction is of no material character. To conceive of Christianity as built upon an Empty Tomb, or on any other plain physical or historical fact, is dangerous. To base it upon the primary facts of consciousness, or upon direct spiritual experience as Paul did, is safer.[1] There are parts of the structure of Religion which may with advantage be underpinned by physical science: the theory of Death and of continued personal existence is one of them; there are many others, and there will be more. But there are, and always will be, vast religious regions for which that kind of scientific foundation would be an impertinence; though a scientific contribution is permissible. Perhaps these may be summed up in some such phrase as "the relation of the soul to God."

[1] It may be supposed that I am here intending to cast doubt upon a fundamental tenet of the Church. But my contention, at present, is merely that a great structure should not rest upon a point. So might a lawyer properly say: "To base a legal decision upon the position of a comma, or other punctuation,—however undisputed its occurrence—is dangerous; to base it upon the general sense of a document is safer."

Assertions are made concerning material facts in the name of religion; these science is bound to criticise. Testimony is borne to inner personal experience; on that physical science does well to be silent. Nevertheless many of us are impressed with the conviction that everything in the universe may become intelligible if we go the right way to work; and so we are coming to recognise, on the one hand, that every system of truth must be intimately connected with every other, and that this connexion will constitute a trustworthy criterion, as it is gradually revealed by the progress of knowledge; and, on the other hand, that the extensive foundation of truth now being laid by scientific workers will ultimately support a gorgeous building of æsthetic feeling and religious faith.

Theologians have been apt to be too easily satisfied with a pretended foundation that would not stand scientific scrutiny; they have seemed to believe that the religious edifice, with its mighty halls for the human spirit, can ultimately rest upon ancient events and statements, instead of upon man's nature as a whole; and they usually decline to reconsider their formulæ in the light of fuller knowledge and development.

Scientific men, on the other hand, have been liable to suppose that no foundation which they have not themselves laid can be of a substantial character; thereby ignoring the possibility of an ancestral accumulation of sound though un-

organised experience. And a few of the less considerate, about a quarter of a century ago, amused themselves by instituting a kind of jubilant rat-hunt under the venerable theological edifice: a procedure naturally obnoxious to its occupants. The exploration was unpleasant, but its results have been purifying and healthful, and the permanent substratum of fact has already been cleared of much of the decaying refuse of centuries.

Much of the more seriously conducted controversy between the two contending parties turned upon those frequently discussed topics—the possibility of the Miraculous, and the efficacy of Prayer. Let us elaborate the thesis maintained in the last chapter, by discussing further, though still briefly, these two connected subjects.

II. Meaning of Miracle

We must begin by admitting that the term "miracle" is ambiguous, and that no discussion which takes that term as a basis is likely to be very fruitful, since the combatants may all be meaning different things.

1. One user of the term may mean merely an unusual event of which we do not know the history and cause,—a bare wonder or prodigy; such an event as the course of nature may, for all we know, bring about once in ten thousand years or so, without any record of its occurrence in the past and with no ground for expecting its recurrence in the future. The raining down of

fire on Sodom, or on Pompeii; the sudden engulfing of Korah, or of Marcus Curtius; or, on a different plane, the advent of some transcendent genius, or even of a personality so lofty as to be called divine, may serve as examples.

2. Another employer of the term "miracle" may add to this idea a definite hypothesis, and may mean an act due to unknown intelligent and living agencies operating in a self-willed and unpredictable manner; thus effecting changes that would not otherwise have occurred and that are not in the regular course of nature. The easiest example to think of is one wherein the lower animals are chiefly concerned; for instance, consider again the community of an ant-hill, on a lonely uninhabited island, undisturbed for centuries, whose dwelling is kicked over one day by a shipwrecked sailor. The ants had reason to suppose that events were uniform, and all their difficulties ancestrally known; it must seem to them an unintelligible miracle. A different illustration is afforded by the presence of an obtrusive but unsuspected live insect in a galvanometer or other measuring instrument in a physical laboratory; whereby metrical observations would be complicated, and all regularity perturbed, in a puzzling and capricious and, to half-instructed knowledge, supernatural, or even diabolical, manner. Not dissimilar are some of the asserted occurrences in a Séance room.

3. Another may use the term "miracle" to

mean the utilisation of unknown laws, say of healing or of communication ; laws unknown and unformulated, but instinctively put into operation by mental activity of some kind,—sometimes through the unconscious influence of so-called self-suggestion, sometimes through the activity of another mind, or through the personal agency of more highly gifted beings, operating on others ; laws whereby time and space appear temporarily suspended, or extraordinary cures are effected, or other effects produced, such as the levitations and other physical phenomena related of the saints.

4. Another may incorporate with the word "miracle" a still further infusion of theory, and may mean always a direct interposition of Divine Providence ; whereby at some one time and place a unique occurrence is brought about, which is out of relation with the established order of things, is not due to what has gone before, and is not likely to recur. The most striking examples of what can be claimed under this head are connected with the personality of Jesus Christ,—notably the Virgin Birth and the Empty Tomb ; by which I mean the more material and controversial aspects of those generally accepted Christian doctrines — the Incarnation and the Resurrection.

To summarise this part. The four categories are: (1) A natural or orderly though unusual portent, (2) a disturbance due to unknown living creatures, (3) a utilisation by mental or spiritual

power of unknown laws, (4) direct interposition of the Deity.

III. Arguments concerning the Miraculous

In some cases an argument concerning the so-called miraculous will turn upon the question whether such things are theoretically possible.

In other cases it will turn upon whether or not they have ever actually happened.

In a third case the argument will be directed to the question whether they happened or not on some particular occasion.

And in a fourth case the argument will hinge upon the particular category under which any assigned occurrence is to be placed:—

For instance, take a fact of undoubted authenticity,—an event upon the actual occurrence of which there can be no dispute,—and yet one of which the history and manner are quite unknown. Take, for instance, the origin of Life; or to be more definite, say the origin of life on any given planet, the Earth for instance. There is practically no doubt that the Earth was once a hot and molten and sterile globe. There is no doubt at all that it is now the abode of an immense variety of living organic nature. How did that life arise? Is it an event to be placed under head (1), as an unexpected outcome of the ordinary course of nature, a development naturally following upon the formation of extremely complex molecular aggregates—proto-

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plasm and the like—as the Earth cooled; or must it be placed under head (4), as due to the direct Fiat of the Eternal?

Again, take the existence of Christianity as a living force in the world of to-day. This is connected with a series of events, of undoubtedly substantial truth, centring round a historical personage. Under which category is that to be placed? Was his advent to be regarded as analogous to the appearance of a mighty genius, such as may at any time revolutionise the course of human history; or is he to be regarded as a direct manifestation and incarnation of the Deity Himself?

These great themes serve as illustrations of our subject; but I have no intention of entering upon them in this chapter. They are questions which have been asked, and presumably answered, again and again; and it is on lines such as these that debates concerning the miraculous are usually conducted. But what I want to say is that so long as we keep the discussion on these lines, and ask questions only of this sort, though we shall succeed in emphasising real difficulties, we shall not progress far towards a solution of any of them: nor shall we gain much aid towards life.

IV. Law and Guidance

The way to progress is not thus to lose ourselves in detail and in confusing estimates of

possibilities, but to concentrate attention on two main issues, which may be very briefly formulated thus:

1. Are we to believe in irrefragable law?
2. Are we to believe in spiritual guidance?

If we affirm the first of these issues, we accept an orderly and systematic universe, with no arbitrary cataclysms and no breaks in its essential continuity. Catastrophes occur, but they occur in the regular course of events, they are not brought about by capricious and lawless agencies; they are a part of the entire cosmos, regulated on the principle of unity and uniformity: though to the dwellers in any time and place, from whose senses most of the cosmos is hidden, they may appear to be sudden and portentous dislocations of natural order.

So much is granted if we agree to the first of the above issues. If we prefer the second, we postulate a purposeful and directed universe, carrying on its evolutionary processes from an unalterable past into an anticipated future with a definite aim; not left to the random control of inorganic forces, like a motor-car which has lost its driver, but permeated throughout by mind and intention and foresight and will. Not mere energy, but constantly directed energy—the energy being controlled by something which is not energy, nor akin to energy, something which presumably is immanent in the universe and is akin to life and mind.

The alternative to these two beliefs is a universe of random chance and chaotic disorder, not a cosmos or universe at all — a multiverse rather. Consequently I take it that we all hold to one or other of the above two beliefs. But do we, and can we, hold to both?

So far as I conceive my present mission, it is to urge that the two beliefs are not inconsistent with each other,—in fact that we may contemplate them in combination, and should gradually feel our way towards simultaneously accepting both.

1. We must realise that the Whole is a single undeviating law-saturated cosmos;
2. But we must also realise that the Whole consists not of matter and motion alone, nor yet of spirit and will alone, but of both and all; we must even yet further, and enormously, enlarge our conception of what the Whole contains.

Scientific men have preached the first of these desiderata, but have been liable to take a narrow view regarding the second. Keenly alive to law, and system, and material fact, they have been occasionally insensitive to art, to emotion, to poetry, and to the higher mental and spiritual environment which inspires and glorifies the realm of knowledge.

The temptation of religious men has also lain in the direction of too narrow an exclusiveness; for they have been so occupied with their own conceptions of the fulness of things that they have failed to grasp what is implied by a strictly orderly cosmos. They have allowed the emotional content to overpower the intellectual, and have too often ignored, disliked, and practically rejected, an integral portion of the scheme,—appearing to desire, what no one can really wish for, a world of uncertainty and caprice, where effects can be produced without adequate cause, and where the connection of antecedent and consequent can be arbitrarily dislocated.

The same error has therefore dogged the steps of both classes of men. An acceptance of miracle, in the crude sense of arbitrary intervention and special providence, has been forced upon those who feel strangled in the grip of inorganic and mechanical law, without being able to reconcile it with the idea of friendly guidance and intelligent control. And a denial of miracle, in every sense, that is of all providential leading, and all controlling intelligence, may be the outcome of the same kind of inability, in people of different temperament,—people who, being convinced of law and order, cannot recognise any directing intelligence in the midst of uniformity, and who regard the absence of dislocation and interference as a mark of the inorganic, the mechanical, the inexorable. Wherefore the denial

of miracle has often led to a sort of practical atheism and to an assertion of the valuelessness of prayer.

But to those who are able to combine and accept both the above faiths, prayer is quite consistent with an orderly cosmos, for it may represent a portion of the guiding and controlling will; somewhat as the desire of the inhabitants of a town for a civic improvement may be a part of the agency which ultimately brings it about, no matter whether the city be representatively or autocratically governed.

The two beliefs cannot be logically combined by those who think of themselves as something detached from and outside the cosmos, operating on it externally, and seeking to modify its manifestations by petitions which, addressed to a system of ordered force, must be vain. To such persons the above propositions must seem contradictory or mutually exclusive. But if we can grasp the idea that we ourselves are an intimate part of the whole scheme, that our wishes and desires are a part of the controlling and guiding will,—then our mental action cannot but be efficient, if we exercise it in accordance with the highest and truest laws of our being.

V. Miracle and Science

How mind can act on matter at all is at present a puzzle. Vitality is clearly the intermediary, and an animal can perform actions and

bring about changes in the material world that cannot be predicted by mechanics and that would not otherwise have occurred. Some people believe that such changes must affect the conservation of energy, and must render that law doubtful; unless life itself be one of the forms of energy. But my contention is that life is, from the mechanical point of view, not a force nor an energy, but only a guiding and directing influence. It directs terrestrial energy along a certain channel, it utilises the energies which are running to waste, so to speak, and guides them in a specific way,—as a waterfall may be made to light a town instead of merely dashing itself picturesquely against rocks, — but it affects the *quantity* of energy no whit.

This subject of "guidance" is a large one, and I must be brief. I have dealt with it in my book on *Life and Matter*; but it is a point of fundamental importance, and I will try to exhibit and illustrate it still more clearly. I mean by "guidance," the influencing of activity without "work," the directing of energy without generating it, the utilisation of pre-existent activity for preconceived and purposed ends.

To show that "work" is not necessary for guidance, even in mechanics, we may take an instance. A railway guides a train to its destination; while the engine supplies the energy and propels it. Any force exerted by the rails is perpendicular to the motion and does no work;

except in so far as the rails retard the motion by friction.

But if this example be used as a parable, it may be objected that the exertion of force is itself a mechanical operation, even though no work is done; that a single force must generate momentum, whatever precautions are taken against its generating energy; and that, in mechanics, momentum cannot be generated on the whole, by any system of forces, since they always occur in pairs and balance.

Quite true: action and reaction are always equal and opposite, and both are always to be found in the physical world. Life may call out a "stress" in that world—a stress which would not otherwise exist,—but life sustains none of the reaction. Life never exerts an unbalanced force, or generates momentum, any more than it generates energy; *all* its operations thoroughly obey the laws of mechanics, and, from the mechanical point of view, are complete in the physical world. Initiation, Plan, and Purpose alone are extra.

Life and mind have determined where the rails shall be laid down, and when and whence and whither the trains are to be run, but they exert no iota of force upon them; so the distinction between a propelling and a deflecting force is a needless distinction for our present purposes. Whenever a force is exerted it is one component of a "stress" between two material bodies, whether it be a working or a guiding force.

But, for the kind of guidance exercised by life, force, through a common intermediary, is not a necessary one. A path can guide a traveller to his destination, without exerting any force upon him at all. Similarly, a railway time-table, emanating from the Traffic Manager's office, determines the running of many trains; but it is not a form of energy, nor does it exert force.

What a human being can do is to get some of the energy from the outside world into his muscles, by the acts of feeding and breathing, in order that it may be amenable to nerve-messages sent from his brain, and so ultimately from his mind,—which apparently has the power of liberating detents, or pulling triggers, in that strange physiological link with another order of existence. How the brain acts: how a thought or an act of will can liberate the energy of a brain cell in a particular direction: is not yet known. It belongs to the mysterious borderland between physics and psychology. We can only appeal to the fact of consciousness, and illustrate it by saying that a trigger can precipitate an explosion of violence quite incommensurable with that of the energy required to pull the trigger. The work done in pulling the trigger results in infinitesimal local heat, of just the same magnitude whether the prepared explosion results or not: it is independent also of the direction and the epoch of the shot. The aim, and the moment at which to pull the trigger, are determined by the mind

of the sportsman, without affecting the question of energy. So, inasmuch as liberation of energy can be accomplished by work entirely incommensurate with the result, it would appear that ultimately it can be achieved by no "work" at all,—through the mysterious intervention of the brain as a connector between the psychical and physical worlds, which otherwise would not be in touch.

Life is not energy, but it is the director of energy, and of matter. It achieves results which would not otherwise have occurred. Even plant life does that: the green leaves direct the energy of sunshine to the decomposition and re-invigoration of thoroughly burned and stable compounds, carbonic acid and water.

Engineering and architectural operations produce bridges, and breakwaters, and buildings, of a character instinct with mind and purpose. The organic energy needed for the operation is brought by the navvies in their food-cans, and they direct that energy so as to exert propulsive force and do the work; but the controlling mind is that of the architect or the engineer.

The only thing that prevents our calling the whole operation a miracle is that we are so thoroughly accustomed to the occurrence.

Mind determines. Life directs. The material universe is dominated and controlled by these agencies; which utilise the energy they find available, and direct it into desired channels.

Finally, whatever difficulties we may feel about understanding the process, we ought not to be accused of dualism on account of our insistence on separate categories — life and mind on the one side, body and mechanism on the other. However dominant one of these predicaments may be over the other, they may ultimately prove to be parts of some comprehensive whole. Domination, or even antagonism, between the parts of a whole is common enough. One man can dominate or can oppose another, although both are members of the same race, nation, or family. The head can dominate a limb, though both are parts of a single body. So also can Mind and Life dominate and transcend matter and energy. And they do this none the less effectually because in some ultimate monistic unity they may all be recognised as parts or aspects of some one stupendous Reality.

VI. Miracle and Religion

So much for general considerations, which in this case are by far the most important; we may now descend to a few practical remarks. When speaking of miracles, what people are usually interested in are miracles in detail; they have usually some special instances in their minds, and they want those instances discussed. Using the term "miracle" in quite a popular sense, and meaning by it nothing defined or susceptible of definition, but simply the signs and wonders

recorded in the Bible or in the lives of the Saints, they ask, "Has the progress of science rendered the occurrence of these things more, or less, probable?" The first and obvious answer, —that it has rendered them decidedly less credible, that is to say, less easy of acceptance than they were at the time of their record, or even fifty years ago,—is too manifest to require giving. For till recently they were hardly questioned, except here and there by a few adventurous spirits, who were liable to be stigmatised as "infidel" for being faithful to their convictions.

But if the subjective aspect is passed by as too obvious, and if it be asked whether science has made the occurrence of the so-called miracles objectively more reasonably probable,—it is controversial, but it is not absurd, to answer concerning many of them—"in some respects, yes":—an answer which is most obviously applicable to the miracles of healing. And why? Because in modern medical practice, especially as developed on the Continent, similar occurrences are experienced to-day; for instance, the production, by self- or other suggestion, of wounds analogous to the "stigmata," and cases of what might appear to be miraculous healing. Whether this fact, if we assume it to be a fact, is one to be welcomed or otherwise by interpreters of Holy Writ, is a question for themselves to answer.

The reasonable scientific view is that a complete knowledge of nature would enable us to recognise the *rationale* of every event which ever occurred, or ever can occur; and so it would seem to follow, concerning any given apparent prodigy —either that it did not happen as related, or else that it happened in accordance with natural laws of which at present we are more or less ignorant. Some of the popularly-quoted miracles presumably did not happen, and were never by competent judges really thought to have happened, as narrated by the poet or rhapsodist of the time. To regard the poetic suspension of the motion of the sun (or earth) as a scientific statement, is absurd. But while it is mere illiteracy to suppose that all classes of recorded miracle represent statements of fact—since careful precision in recording fact is a rather modern accomplishment, not likely to be regarded then, nor in some quarters even now, as particularly desirable or edifying,—yet certain of them may be worthy of consideration, as at any rate believed by the recorder to have occurred as he states them; and, besides, as not wholly outside the range of conceivable possibility.

But in so far as they are recognised as reasonably possible, miracles surely lose force as specifically religious evidence, and become merely hints towards an extension of knowledge. I suppose it must be admitted that the more natural, and so to speak commonplace, an event becomes,

the less *exceptional* religious significance can be accorded to it, and the less momentous becomes the question of its actual occurrence. Nevertheless it may be legitimate to recognise that a human being of specially lofty character may, perhaps inevitably, be endowed with faculties and powers beyond the present scope of the race: faculties and powers fully intelligible neither to himself nor to anyone else. Even a genius has an inkling of exceptional powers. No one can explain, or render ordinarily probable *à priori*, the existence of a child-prodigy capable of performances in music or in arithmetic beyond the power of nearly all adults. Genius combined with sainthood may achieve what to ordinary men are marvels and miracles. Even without sainthood, and without genius, some abnormally constituted specimens of the human race—possibly anticipating future development as a kind of premature sport, or possibly displaying the remains of ancestral powers now nearly lost to the race—are found to possess faculties unusual and almost incredible,—faculties which in fact are widely and vigorously disbelieved in by nearly all who have not studied them.

Whether a given prophet has extraordinary power, and how far his power extends, must be settled by evidence; but whatever his power, it is by the content of his message that he is to be judged, not by some accompanying extension of the customary control of mind over matter.

All this is well-worn ground, and I refrain from emphasising a great number of obvious contentions, *e.g.*, that it is quite wrong to accept a bad and immoral message because it is accompanied by amazing phenomena. The worst of men can do things beyond the power of an insect,—things which to its consciousness, if it had any, would be miraculous.

Either there are modes of activity other than those familiar to humanity, or there are not. If there are, it is the business of science to ascertain their existence and what effect they may have on our material surroundings: it is not necessarily the business of religion, though like everything else it will have a bearing on religion. But, because it is a nascent and infantile branch of science, is it therefore of little importance or small interest? By no means. All these things are essentially worthy of investigation, and they will be investigated by those who feel called to the work, although they are looked at askance by some of the scientific magnates of to-day. Discovery of facts does not create them, it only helps us in adjusting our conduct; and every inquiry should be conducted in a cool calm spirit, without prejudice and without preconception, with no object in view but simple ascertainment of truth.

The atmosphere of religion should be recognised as enveloping and permeating everything; it should not be specially or exclusively sought as an emanation from signs and wonders.

Strange and ultranormal things may happen, and are well worthy of study, but they are not to be regarded as either holy or the reverse. Some may turn out to be a genuine extension of human faculty, while others may have to be otherwise explained, but none can be accepted without investigation. Testimony concerning such things is to be treated in a sceptical and yet open-minded spirit; the aid of theory and experiment is to be invoked, as in any other branch of natural knowledge; and indiscriminate dogmatic rejection is as inappropriate as wholesale uncritical acceptance.

The bearing on the hopes and fears of humanity of such unusual facts as can be verified may be considerable, but they bear no exceptional witness to guidance and control. Guidance and control, if admitted at all, must be regarded as constant and continuous; and it is just this regular character that makes them so difficult to recognise. It is always difficult to perceive or apprehend anything which is perfectly smooth and uniform. Those fish, for instance, which are submerged in ocean-depths, beyond the reach of waves and tides, are probably utterly unconscious of the existence of water; and, however intelligent, they can have but little reason to believe in that medium,—notwithstanding that their whole being, life, and motion, are dependent upon it from instant to instant. The motion of the earth, again, furious rush though it is—fifty times faster than

a cannon ball—is quite inappreciable to our senses; it has to be inferred from celestial observations, and it was strenuously disbelieved by the agnostics of an earlier day.

Uniformity is always difficult to grasp—our senses are not made for it; and yet it is characteristic of everything that is most efficient. Jerks and jolts are easy to appreciate, but they do not conduce to progress. Steady motion is what conveys us on our way, collisions are but a retarding influence. The seeker after miracle, in the exceptional and narrow or exclusive sense, is pining for a catastrophe; the investigator of miracle, in the continuous and broad or comprehensive sense, has the universe for a laboratory.

VII. Human Experience

Let us survey our position.

We find ourselves for a few score years incarnate intelligences on this planet; we have not always been here, and we shall not always be here: we are here in fact, each of us, for but a very short period; but we can study the conditions of existence while here, and we perceive clearly that a certain amount of guidance and control are in our hands. For better for worse we can, and our legislators do, influence the destinies of the planet. The process is called "making history." We can all, even the humblest of us, influence to some extent the destinies of individuals with whom we come into relation;

and we have a corresponding sense of power and responsibility.

It is not likely that we are the only, or the highest, intelligent agents in the whole wide universe, nor that we possess faculties and powers denied to all else; nor is it likely that our own activity will be always as limited as it is now. The Parable of the Talents is full of meaning, and it contains a meaning that is not often brought out: namely, that our powers and responsibilities will for ever increase, at a rate dependent on their magnitude and fulness of use.

But, apart from the significance of such a pregnant phrase as "the joy of the Lord," it is absurd to deny the attributes of guidance and intelligence and personality and love to the Whole; seeing that we are part of the Whole, and are conscious of possessing them ourselves. These attributes are existent therefore, and cannot be denied; cannot be denied even to Deity.

Is the planet subject to intelligent control? We know that it is: we ourselves can change the course of rivers for predestined ends, we can make highways, can unite oceans, can devise inventions, can make new compounds, can transmute species, can plan fresh variety of organic life; we can create works of art; we can embody clear ideas and lofty emotions in forms of language and music, and can leave them as Platonic off-

spring[1] to remote posterity. Our power is doubtless limited, but we can surely learn to do far more than we have yet so far, in the infancy of humanity, accomplished; more even than we have yet conjectured as within the range of possibility.

Our progress already has been considerable. It is but a moderate time since our greatest men were chipping flints and carving bones into the likeness of reindeer. More recently they became able to build cathedrals and make poems. Now we are momentarily diverted from immortal pursuits by vivid interest in that kind of competition which has replaced the competition of the sword, and by those extraordinary inequalities of possession and privilege which have resulted from the invention of an indestructible and transmissible form of riches,—a form over which neither moth nor rust has any power. We raise an incense of smoke, and offer sacrifices of squalor and ugliness, in worship of this new idol. But it will pass; human life is not meant to continue as it is now in city slums; nor is the strenuous futility of mere accumulation likely to satisfy people when once they have been really educated. The world is beautiful, and may be far more widely happy than it has been yet. Those who have preached this hitherto have been heard with deaf ears; but some day we shall awake to a sense of our true planetary importance, and

[1] Plato's *Symposium*, 209.

shall recognise the higher possibilities of existence. Then shall we realise and practically believe what is involved in those words of poetic insight,

> "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men."

There is a vast truth in this yet to be discovered. Power and influence and responsibility lie before us, appalling in their magnitude; and as yet we are but children playing on the stage, before the curtain is rolled up for the drama in which we are to take part.

But we are not left to our own devices: we of this living generation are not alone in the universe. What we call the individual is strengthened by elements emerging from the social whole out of which he is born. We are not things of yesterday, nor of to-morrow. We do not indeed remember our past; we are not aware of our future; but in common with everything else we must have had a past, and must be going to have a future. Some day we may find ourselves able to realise both.

Meanwhile, what has been our experience here? We have not been left solitary. Every newcomer to the planet, however helpless and strange he be, finds friends awaiting him, devoted and self-sacrificing friends, eager to care for and protect his infancy and to train him in the ways of this curious world. It is typical of what goes on throughout conscious existence; the guidance

which we exert, and to which we are subject now, is but a phase of something running through the universe. And when the time comes for us to quit this sphere and enter some larger field of action, I doubt not that we shall find, there also, that kindness and help and patience and love, without which no existence would be tolerable or even at some stages possible.

Miracles lie all around us: only they are not miraculous. Special providences envelop us: only they are not special. Prayer is a means of communication as natural and as simple as is speech.

Realise that you are part of a great orderly and mutually helpful cosmos,—that you are not stranded or isolated in a foreign universe, but that you are part of it and closely akin to it,—and your sense of sympathy will be enlarged, your power of free communication will be opened, and the heartfelt aspiration and communion and petition that we call prayer will come as easily and as naturally as converse with those human friends and relations whose visible bodily presence gladdens and enriches your present life.

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CHAPTER IV

THE ALLEGED INDIFFERENCE OF LAYMEN TO RELIGION

THE average layman of the present day is often accused of being indifferent to religion. But the allegation as worded seems to me untrue, unless by "laymen" is understood the masses weighed down by extreme penury. Even then I doubt if they are indifferent to real religion, or to reality and sincerity and lofty-mindedness of any kind. No one can be really indifferent to the great problems of existence—the mysteries of life and death and human destiny. It is doubtful whether reasonably fed people can be considered indifferent even to theology, of a sort, — to problems connected with apparent oppositions between knowledge and faith, for instance, or to questions of Biblical interpretation and the nature of Inspiration. They are open to the influence of a saintly life, and are not disposed to treat lightly such fundamental subjects as the

existence of Deity and the relations between man and God.

I gather that people are not indifferent in this country to these topics, because they seem always willing to read about them or to discuss them. And if this refers chiefly to the more educated classes, it may be maintained on behalf of the masses that their apparently perennial excitement about what doctrines shall be taught to small children, though it may lack lucidity, seems to argue anything but indifference.

In Germany and France, so far as I can judge, people in general do not care in the same way to discuss religious questions; and theological magazines appeal mainly to specialists. There is certainly less of general interest and wide circulation on the subject; and the average mind seems closed, either in the positive or in the negative direction, as regards religious beliefs. But here it is otherwise; and I have heard it maintained at a discussion society that there was really nothing except religion and politics which was worth the trouble of getting excited about.

Nevertheless there is a sense in which people in this country are indifferent to something allied to religion—at any rate to its outward and visible manifestations. To Ecclesiasticism they are indifferent, and they do not in any great number go to church. I take the allegation which is here being dealt with to intend to ask the question, Why is this? Why have the outward and visible

forms of religion lost hold[1] of both educated and uneducated people?

I believe that over-pressure is one answer—a general sense of the shortness of life and the immense amount there is to be done in it. This holds true whether the press of occupation is caused by the demands of pleasure, or of business, or of investigation, or of work for the public weal. In each case time is all too short for what can now be crowded into it. As soon as our faculties are well developed, and our influence fairly active, it is almost time to begin to think of being called to service elsewhere,—there is no leisure to expend in unprofitable directions.

Is going to church unprofitable, then? To some men, often, yes; to others, I suppose, always, no: save in the sense that they have not profited by it. Perhaps to none is it quite unprofitable, but they may think it so. If it acted as a stimulus and an inspiration and a help to life, then surely people in general would not be so foolish as to be indifferent to it. But they may be mistaken; this is the age of strenuousness and high pressure, and it may be that a quiet hour of peaceful meditation would be the very best sedative and rest-cure for many men whose activities are wearing them out. Some, and those among the most

[1] I say "lost" hold, because I suppose I may infer, from the churches which they erected, as well as from the practice of truly Roman Catholic countries at the present day, that, in say the twelfth century, observance of the outward forms of religion once really had a firm grasp of the majority of Englishmen.

strenuous of all, have found it so. Mr. Gladstone, for instance, was a studious attendant at public worship, and I should not be surprised to hear that the German Emperor and President Roosevelt are so likewise: possibly in their case partly as an example, but also quite possibly as a private solace.

One cannot but admire men, to whom every five minutes is of value, who thus give up large tracts of time to religious exercises; and it is probable that many active men who ignore this help would be the better in every way if they too submitted themselves to the same discipline. It may be one of those cases where more haste is the less speed, and where the public assembling of ourselves together, in a reverent and worshipful spirit, would be a real contribution to vitality and power. Under certain conditions I feel sure that it would be so; but is it so under present conditions? The answer must depend partly on individual temperament, partly on the form of "service" available.

We must all be acquainted with the soothed and sympathetic feeling which is sometimes the result of attendance at a place of worship in company with others, even if nothing particular has been said worth carrying away: this is felt especially if the occasion is a symbolic one—a national thanksgiving, for instance, a demonstration of religious feeling by members of a scientific body, or some other exceptional occasion;

but if it is a mere everyday or weekly service, there must be some special harmony or congruity between the assembly and the words they have heard, or the ceremonies that have been performed, in order that the effect may be produced.

There appear to be some ecclesiastically minded persons who can derive sustenance from a repast which to others may seem composed of innutritious and unattractive viands. I have seen Mr. Gladstone (the name of so great a man may be employed as illustration without impertinence) in an attitude of rapt and earnest attention,—not to the words of the Bible, which any one might be glad to hear, nor to the words of the Prayer Book, which to those with a strongly-developed historic sense may carry with them a world of heartfelt emotion—but to the utterance from the pulpit of a very ordinary discourse. To most of us, however, this patient self-contribution to what is going on is denied; and the feeling with which some go away from an average place of worship is too often a feeling of irritation and regret for wasted time.

I have known men of energy supply the needed intellectual exercise, and contrive to stimulate their historic sense, by using a Latin Prayer Book and a Greek Testament; and something of the sort is sorely needed if one is to attempt to keep one's attention fixed on the ancient formularies, so familiar from childhood, and recited or chanted in so meaningless a manner.

A certain number of men, I believe, cultivate a habit of inattention during the greater part of the proceedings; and it is possible, though less easy, to preserve an attitude of mental inattention even when reciting formularies with the lips. Strenuously to attend to the meaning of the clauses, in a creed, for instance, or even in the Lord's Prayer, is an effort. I do not believe it is often made. The words are slipped through, and if an idea is caught every now and again, that is all that can be expected. There was a time when this inattentive recital of the well-known and familiar could be tolerated; and before the days of education it was probably useful. To many it may be useful still—to some it is tedious. The fact is, the conventional English Church Service, or eclectic admixture of combined services, is too long; and, as I think, too mechanical. The Psalter as a whole must surely be found tedious. The jewels would shine out more brightly if re-set. Some of the prayers are beautiful; and would be most impressive if they were properly read and were not spoiled by such frequent iteration. The little song at the end of each commandment is gorgeous when one hears it in the *Elijah*, but it gets tiresome at the ninth repetition. The "Confession" is historically interesting and sometimes perhaps appropriate, but as a rule it is excessive and unreal; and if ever true, it is not a thing one wishes to sing in public, nor indeed to *sing* at all, still

less to pay a few boys and men to sing or monotone for one.

The *Te Deum*, on a national occasion, and sung slowly and emphatically, may be magnificent: as ordinarily treated it is almost useless, and seems only inserted as a convenient break between the Lessons; save occasionally when the setting and singing are specially good, in which case it can be enjoyed as an oratorio is enjoyed.

Some people may be able to utilise parts of the service which to others are tedious, and it may be contended that there is something for everybody; but for most people there must be long spells of dulness.

Length, however, is not the only objection: rapidity, which is perhaps a consequence of length, is another. Constantly and rapidly repeated formularies must surely tend to become mechanical. We jeer at the Thibetan water-worked praying-wheel as a mechanical form of prayer; and yet I can imagine a peasant joyfully going on with his labour in the fields, in the consciousness that his prayer was being periodically turned up to heaven by the forces of nature, and his soul might send an aspiration after it, without interfering with the industry of his body. I doubt if such a ritual is really more mechanical than some English services which I have attended. I know well that any liturgy—the bleakest as well as the most ornate—can elevate the soul of the truly pious; but this minority cannot be

included among the laity of whom indifference to religion is even alleged.

As to the recital of a few incredible articles in the creeds, I say nothing: they are not numerous, and hardly act as a strong deterrent except to a few earnest souls; if there were reality about the procedure, some of the clauses would be repellent, but as it is, the so-called Athanasian hymn can be chanted through with the rest: it is an interesting glimpse into an ingenious mediæval mind, to whom all the mystery of Divinity was expressible in words, with great positiveness of assurance, and with arithmetical precision of specification. But so far as the Creeds and the Articles contain things to which we and our teachers, the beneficed clergy, are expected to adhere, they ought to be, and are to some extent, deterrent; for it must be admitted that they require a good deal of explanation, and in manner of expression are out of date.

With full enthusiasm for religion, a reformer might say to professional Churchmen: — You really cannot continue to expect people to wade continually through so much mediæval and ecclesiastical lore. You must free the ship of official religion from incrustation: it is water-logged and overburdened now, and its sails are patched and outworn. I do not ask you to use steam or any new-fangled mode of propulsion. By all means keep your attachment to the past, but study reality and sincerity; strive to say what

you really mean, and to say it in such way that others may know that you mean it, and may feel that they mean it too. The American Church has modified some of the features characteristic of the Anglican Liturgy; and its authorised Prayer Book contains interesting minor variations; all of which are devised in the interests of elasticity and freedom, yet subject to a commendable spirit of conservatism.

I trust that it is not an inseparable concomitant of a State religion that petitions should be tied and bound in rigid forms, so that no audible prayer can be uttered except what is printed and authorised; it is pitiful when the only initiation permitted, even at times of stress, lies in the emphasis which may be thrown upon certain words, and the pauses that may be made after them. But at least the sermon is free. So let preachers realise their opportunities and make use of them, and let them no longer throw away their chance of moving the hearts of men towards a higher and more useful and unselfish life, by over-attention to the conventional arrangement called the Church's Year. The annual commemoration of everything is often made an excuse for laziness: it saves the trouble of choosing a subject. It provides a hackneyed theme ready to hand, to be treated in a conventional and hackneyed manner. Silently and patiently the people sit there, and are not fed.

Religion is one thing; Church services as often

conducted are quite another thing. Modification of any kind will be resented and opposed by some singularly minded lay Churchmen; and there will be great differences of opinion among the Clergy as to the form Revision should take. Nevertheless, if more eminent ability is to be attracted to the service of the Church,—if the great body of the laity is to be reached in any serious and effective manner,—modifications, excisions, and reforms are necessary. It is not religion to which people are indifferent.

Note.—In "The Act of Uniformity Amendment Act, 1872" (35 and 36 Vict. c. 35), an abbreviated form of Service is specified, and permission is accorded to use it on ordinary week days, instead of, or in Cathedrals as a supplement to, the Order for Morning or for Evening Prayer.

If permission to use this shortened form—with a selection from approved additions appropriate to the times—could be extended to Sundays also, distinct relief would be gained, and the amount of legislative change required would be a minimum.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS REFORM

IF I were challenged to say wherein I think that an improvement might be made in the regulations and arrangements for a National Christian Church under present conditions, I should emphasise three things :

First, more spontaneity and less monotony in Church service of all kinds, and the abandonment of mechanical uniformity in worship.

Second, more liberal education for Ministers ; and the broadening and simplification of tests, so as to exclude very few well-qualified men.

Third, and consequent upon these two, clear-sighted recognition of the signs of the times, study and enlightened encouragement of true beneficence, and stalwart opposition to all abuses of power.

I hesitate to enter into detail on these points, and yet I feel impelled to make the attempt ; so I proceed straightforwardly without further expressed apology.

Rubrics

First, concerning regulations for the services of the Church. Here I plead not for legislation,

but for absence of legislation—for the removal of the close and definite legislation which exists now.

Permissively the Prayer Book can remain unchanged, with merely a substitution of "may" for "shall," and with the occasional iteration of words indicating a respect for historic continuity; but all sentences laying down a precise procedure, not as advisable only, but as compulsory—so that any the least variation from it becomes an illegality to be proceeded against in law courts—should surely be cancelled.

Within the Church itself some rules can be laid down, as from time to time may be thought wise by the several branches, but not so as to become burdensome upon the conscience. In the Episcopal branch, the Bishops will naturally have paternal authority, which doubtless they will exercise with moderation and wisdom; in the Presbyterian branch, the Presbytery will have appropriate authority; in the Congregational branch, it is to be presumed, the Council; and so on. Details of practice and use of formularies would thus be determined by presumably competent bodies, who could readily modify them from time to time, while leaving as much elasticity as they might think desirable; and Parliament would be relieved of a burdensome and most inappropriate responsibility.

The Prayer Book, considered as a legal document, was drawn up on the assumption that any freedom or elasticity or spontaneity in

conducting a service was sure to be misused—not through malice and wickedness, but through ignorance and stupidity. It is, in fact, founded on mistrust of intellectual or spiritual competence,—mistrust which tends to justify itself by reaction of the mechanical system upon those who are constantly subjected to its constricting influence. It is also based on the idea that religious feeling is a proper subject for legislation, and that it is possible to coerce men's beliefs, to govern their inclinations and control their consciences, by a rigid system of rubrics and regulations; whereas it is notorious, and almost proverbial, that if the will to break law is active, the most carefully drafted clauses have extremely little binding force. For their interpretation depends in no sort on the intention of those who framed, or of those who authorised, them; their interpretation can be garbled to suit an emergency, or can be adapted to a changed system of opinions.

For instance, the Thirty-Nine Articles, agreed upon by Convocation in 1562 "for the avoiding of diversities of opinions," were for the most part drawn up by Protestants as a bulwark against the Church of Rome—a defence against any approach to the doctrines of that Church in certain well-known and famous controversies:—such as, Scripture not the Rule of faith; Faith not the sole Instrument of Justification; Infallibility of General Councils; Purgatory, Pardons, Relics, Invocation of Saints; five additional Sacraments;

Transubstantiation; the sacrifices of the Mass. But Cardinal Newman, while still a minister of the Church of England, was able to show, in his famous Tract 90, that the wording of the Articles, when taken in conjunction with the similarly Protestant "Homilies," did not, as a matter of fact, exclude the interpretation regarded as baneful by those who formulated them;—in fact, that the Articles lent themselves to Roman interpretation. They did not indeed suggest such an interpretation on their surface, but they were "patient" of it. He argued this with extreme ingenuity, and some special pleading, but, as I think, with a good deal of success. Certainly he has had followers who have largely availed themselves of an unexpected and welcome elasticity in the direction of Romanism, thus unexpectedly discovered in, or extracted out of, or perhaps foisted into, what was intended to be a rigidly Protestant document and scheme of Protestant theology.

And so it will always be with a living and growing Church, or any other organism—quite irrespective of the rights and wrongs of any particular controversy or School of thought. If the thought or School exist, if living and earnest people feel that truth and progress lie in a particular direction, then, however mistaken they may ultimately turn out to be, no system of formularies can bind them; they will not hand over their conscience and their judgment to the custody of a past. They can be loyal to a living

and present spirit in the Church to-day, but not to dead formularies. These they will either ignore, or take in a non-natural sense, or twist till they mean the opposite of what they were intended to mean. Forms of words are usually capable of interpretation in accordance with a living will; and if it be recusant, they can be either ignored or altered.

History is familiar enough with obsolete and repealed Statutes: why should the Statutes which regulate so vital a thing as the professed National Religion alone be free from reconsideration and amendment? If non-alteration be regarded as necessitated by some theory,—that theory is a superstition; the only justification for rigid adherence to fixed forms is the practical danger of licence and unsettling of faith that might result from freedom. That is a point of policy on which it is possible for reasonable people to take opposite sides, at any particular juncture or crisis; but it will be generally admitted that a faith dependent on blinkers and fetters for its maintenance is not likely in a progressive age to last many generations. Anchorage to a submerged rock is not safe amid rising waters.

Suggestions Concerning the Liturgy

The Liturgy itself must be dealt with by experts, and it is barely proper for me to make suggestions; but it is an admitted fact that the Church of England is less in touch with the

people than it used to be, and this is not likely to be wholly and solely the fault of the people. Indeed it may be due to unwisdom rather than to fault of any kind.

At present both the Daily Services are supposed to open with the note of personal sin. But the self-accusation so formulated is seldom really meant: repetition of a monotonous confession must often fail to rouse any feeling or intelligence whatever; and the declaration of absolution follows far too cheaply and easily. The ecclesiastical treatment of sin, especially of corporate sin, is all too lenient. In Ruskin's view its liturgical form appears to yield some "concession to the popular conviction that we obtain the present advantage, and escape the future punishment, of any sort of iniquity, by dexterously concealing the manner of it from man, and triumphantly confessing the quantity of it to God."

If a service is to be efficacious against sin, it should deal with it far more seriously and continuously. If felt as a reality, sin is no light matter, and should not be casually slurred over. During a service really dominated by the sense of personal sinfulness and contrition, the confession of the Communion service is likely to be more effective than the other. The Litany would be an appropriate continuation: many things should precede a declaration of Remission.

But there should be more than one form of service: there might be at least three alternative

forms—sometimes one, sometimes another, to be used. Each of these services should sound a different note. One might be a service not of contrition but of praise: it might open with the Benedictus, continue with the General Thanksgiving, with the Te Deum, the Cantate, or the Venite—without the Jewish ending if possible—and so forth. In none of these services need the beautiful and eloquent short prayers be ever omitted,—such as, the prayer of St. Chrysostom, the Collects for Peace and for Grace, and, when appropriate, the Evening Collects, as also that for the current week, together with Epistle and Gospel; and of course the Lessons would be included.

But the multiplicity and wearisome number of extracts from the Psalter might be mitigated with advantage. The Psalms for the day might be omitted altogether. There can be no need to work through the whole Psalter every month: it is a useless burden; besides, a few of the Psalms are hardly edifying in worship, however instructive they are as historical and biographical lessons.

At times of stress or anxiety a special selection of prayers might be made, and at all times extempore and spontaneous prayer should be permissible. It is profoundly wrong that a petition from the heart of a minister of God is never to be uttered during Divine service. It is an edict of suppression and impotence for the reading desk: of dulness and starvation for the

people. "For a certain measure of variety arrests and engages the attention of worshippers, and sustains their interest." The very name "reading desk" is full of wrong suggestions. The lectern is appropriately named, and so is the pulpit, but the spirit of genuine supplication should brood over at least a part of the service.

A third form of service—where forms are used—might be dominated by the idea of collective or social struggle and error, by the sense of national and corporate sin, by effort after better conditions of existence for others, and by the spirit of public service. Here would come the prayer for Royalty, for Parliament, for the Clergy, for all people; as well as others appropriately chosen, and many added to suit the needs of the time.

At all times it is appropriate to remember the sick and suffering, the prisoners and captives, the desolate and oppressed; just as it is always natural to pray for peace. And in these cases prayer is not merely intercessory prayer, but is a petition for the impulse ourselves to do what lies in our own power to aid in these so touching and so accessible ranges of activity in direct human service.

The keynote of each service should be reality. There should be no vain repetition and no mere formulæ recited in haste without attention to meaning. At present far too much is attempted—far too much in quantity,—and this perhaps is responsible for the hurry and apparent desire to

get through. Surely everything said should be said deliberately and impressively. Possibly, however, the present manner of utterance is not really or solely dependent on the amount to be got through in the time, but is a relic of the Roman practice of reciting prayers in Latin, so as not to be understanded of the common people; with the object apparently of exciting vague emotion undiluted with intelligence. The practice is venerable—but it is hardly consistent with the genius of the Church of England. Intelligibility throughout is surely not a thing to be deprecated, if it can be secured. To this end the service should be short in length, even though not always short in time. *Non multa sed multum* applies intensely to the effective use of a Liturgy. A quantity gabbled through is useless and unimpressive. A small amount really driven home is far more effective. The Te Deum is specially effective when sung slowly and deliberately. It was so sung in more than one church at the last Declaration of Peace.

Above all, the Lord's Prayer, with its brief and profound sentences, is not properly treated when subjected to the gabble of a choir. Every sentence involves thought. The single phrase "Thy Kingdom come" speaks volumes, and contains sufficient for a morning's worship. As a musician takes a theme and develops it fugally and antiphonally with devices of augmentation and diminution and with illuminating counter-

point, so could such a theme as this be made to dominate and re-appear throughout a service. The repetition of the Lord's Prayer several times in an hour suggests an intention to use it as a sort of refrain; but as a refrain it is ineffective, the repetition is too mechanical and careless. Its clauses deserve better treatment than that: slow and earnest elocution suits them best.

Take such a clause as "Thy will be done";—it embraces the whole of religion. If I were a musician I would set the Lord's Prayer to music, and with clashes of instruments and with silences would bring out a part of its meaning in unmistakable manner.[1] The opening phrase "Our Father which art in heaven" may in its full form exhibit signs of liturgical growth or addition, but the note "Father," the dominant of all the chords, is authentic enough. It is all that appears in Luke's version (Hort and Westcott's text), and it is enough.

Wider Education

We need only refer in very general terms to the sort of education appropriate to a candidate for the Ministry of the Gospel. He must be instructed in professional subjects, of course—I say nothing about those; but it is plain that if he is to have any influence on the thought of his time, he must not be ignorant of that thought.

[1] When I wrote this "The Kingdom" had not been produced, and I did not then know the scheme of Sir Edward Elgar's work.

If he is to mix with people, and adapt himself to various conditions of men, he must be able to retain their respect. Immersion in the atmosphere of scholastic theology alone will not suffice. The Bible is a literature with which he must be familiar, but he must not be a man of one book. If he knows only the Bible, he will not know that. A broad and general education should be his, and the discoveries of his age should not be alien to him. In the course of his career he is bound to meet argumentative sceptics; men sometimes of narrow sympathies, but occasionally of fairly wide reading. These he should be able to encounter on their own ground.

It is true that to take a leading position, and to grasp a considerable range of human knowledge, is not given to all; there must be some whose lives are cast amid simpler surroundings, and who will there feel more at home. That is well; but we are considering the ideal up to which a few can be trained, while the majority will rise towards it as far as they can, though they fall short of attainment. The ideal for a minister of Christ to-day is not adequately represented by the charge of the Ordination service, "apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way";—it is not enough, nor is it even wise, to limit study to one thing, and to forsake and set aside all other studies.

Certainly something just and needful is

intended, by that warning against worldly cares and studies, but it is liable to be misunderstood. And even in affairs of business, it may be argued that as so many of the clergy have to address men of business it would be wise for them not to be wholly ignorant and incompetent even in that atmosphere. It is no easy service which the nation demands of its religious teachers—it is the highest and most difficult possible; and the very best and ablest men are needed for the work, if it is to be done properly. At present many are deflected to other careers. In some cases the deflection is due to attraction elsewhere; but in too many it must happen that a faithful and competent man is either consciously or unconsciously repelled by the demands and injunctions placed in his way,—by the attempt made to scare his present conscience or to snare his future one. He learns that the critical spirit is not the spirit of worship; but he suspects also that, however successfully his critical faculty may be put to sleep for a time, it will rise and torment him later on if he abandons his birthright of growth and freedom. So he chooses another vocation.

Tests

And now, what about tests? What tests should be applied to candidates for ordination, so as to exclude self-seeking hypocrites and stealthy infidels?

Whatever words are used, the test-formula should be said by the candidate himself, not by another for him; and it should be said without prompting. The effort of memory needed, for a simple rehearsal like that, is not too much to expect from a man to whom preaching and the cure of souls is to be entrusted. A simple form should suffice: why should not the following be held sufficient?

Here, solemnly in the face of this congregation, I declare before Almighty God, to whose holy will I entirely submit myself, that I long for Christ's ideal of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth; and, God helping me, I will with all my power and ability strive to this end and to no other, with such wisdom as it may please the Holy Spirit to confer upon me; for whose guidance I will always pray to the Father, in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Such a declaration, made in full voice and with uplifted hand, would be far more solemn and impressive, as an answer to the question whether he thinks he is truly called to the ministry of the Church, than the present curious expected answer, "I think so."

Some further declaration on the secular side, against the domination of any foreign potentate in this realm, and some precautionary statement against Jesuitical interpretation and underground scheming, would seem to be necessary also. Moreover, it would be desirable so to legislate

that no weapon of superstition could ever be wielded, by Church authority, so as to inflict on the laity that element of compulsion from which the clergy had been freed. It is to be hoped that certain anti-English auricular practices will never be enforced in any branch of the National Church, however comprehensive it may become.

Re-incorporation

This chapter ought to close with practical suggestions as to how Nonconformist bodies are to be re-incorporated into the National Church; but that must be left to others. I know that at the time of writing an unexpected and most regrettable recrudescence of hostilities has arisen between the State Church and the Free Churches—animosity breaking out over the primary education of the children of the poor,—showing that the pugnacious spirit was only dormant, and that any immediately practical suggestions towards general Christian co-operation would be untimely.

But surely such a state of things can only be temporary. Either some mutual understanding is possible on such a subject, or the country is on the verge of an era of secularism.

It may be that thorough union will come only through disestablishment—that a truly comprehensive National Church is impossible. That is one way towards freedom of conscience. Either the State Church must be enlarged,

broadened, and liberated—freed from exclusive dignities too dearly bought,—or it must cease to be a State Church.

I will not attempt to forecast the course of history: all that I am concerned to urge is combination for the purpose of fighting a common foe, cessation of internecine quarrels, unison of effort among all the branches of the Church of Christ. To me it seems that, as soon as artificial restrictions and disabilities are removed, the re-incorporation will be almost automatic—or would be so were it not for the question of pre-restoration endowments. If a money question is all that would then hinder union—if there is nothing more serious and fundamental than property to be considered—it would be a fact worth finding out.

My attention has been called to certain articles on Church and State, issued in 1891 by Dr. Martineau as vol. ii. of his collected *Essays, Reviews, and Addresses.* Some of them deal with this very matter, especially the essay called "The National Church as a Federal Union." He pointed out the inconsistency of a Church priding itself, simultaneously, both on its rigorous uniformity and on the width of the range of its belief; and says that while the Acts of Uniformity remain, the work of the Church will be honey-combed by the canker of unveracity and self-sophistication.

I will not repeat his arguments and proposals,

for it is not likely that they will command universal assent; but whether those particular proposals are hopeless or not, the spirit of his vision of the unity of Christendom—the longing to see the various folds all one flock, in accordance with the parting prayer of Christ, "for them which shall believe on me . . . that they all may be one"—remains as real as ever. Moreover, many of the non-established Churches are riper for union among themselves, now, than they were even a short time ago; and I adopt as my own the conclusion of the preface to the volume in question:

"I cannot withdraw a protest, however hopeless it may seem, against allowing the Christian Church to remain a mere cluster of rival orthodoxies, disowning and repelling each other; while, in the inmost heart of all, secret affections live and pray, with eye upturned to the same Infinite Perfection, and tears let fall for the same universal sorrows."

CHAPTER VI

UNION AND BREADTH

A Plea for Essential Unity amid Formal Difference in a National Church

"The true tragedy is a conflict of right with right, not of right with wrong."—Hegel

I SOON became aware that my little book called *The Substance of Faith* could hardly be regarded as an eirenicon in respect of the present English Education controversy,—though I began it somewhat with that hope, and still think that it should be of some assistance in that direction,—for it is apparent that the dispute between Church and Dissent is not only of long standing historically, but is intrinsically deep-seated. It would be worth a considerable effort if the inflammation due to that chronic sore could be reduced; but the cure should be attempted, not by blinking or denying the reality of the differences, but by facing them resolutely and understanding their nature and origin before seeking to prescribe a remedy.

The dispute which is most alive to-day between State Church and Free Churches is not exactly

religious: it seems to be rather ethnological or anthropological. That is to say, it may be held to represent a difference inherent in the varied nature of humanity, and to correspond to the divergent views taken of religion by two different types of mind. If there is any truth in this statement, it ought surely to be possible to recognise the fact, and to adjust our arrangements to it, as to any other of the facts of nature.

It must have been frequently pointed out before—but sometimes statements bear and need repetition—that there are two chief religious types: one type valuing ceremony and artistic accessories and human organisation and intervention; while the other—thinking itself competent to dispense with what it may consider adventitious aids—seeks to worship, neither in temple nor even in mountain, but directly in spirit and in truth. This one thinks that the Holy Spirit is equally accessible to every individual. That one conceives that a Special Power is miraculously transmitted by ceremonial means, namely, by the imposition of hands.

Those who take this, which has been called the Apostolic view, necessarily exalt the Church, which to them is God's vicegerent upon earth; for its priests possess a power denied not only to laymen but to ministers of all other denominations,—who in this essential respect are and must be regarded as laymen. It is true that the

branches of the Catholic and Apostolic Church do not agree among themselves entirely as to the authentic channels of this mysterious influence. To the Roman, the Anglican Catholic is a layman, even though he be a prelate.[1] To the strict Anglican, the President of the Wesleyan Conference, or the Moderator of the Presbyterian Synod, may be in friendship a brother, and in good works a helper, but he has no claim to recognition as a priest: nor, indeed, does he prefer such a claim, because he does not belong to the type which appreciates the idea of Divine influence ceremonially conveyed through one human being to another.

But the distinction of type is not confined to the clergy: it runs through the laity likewise. Those who believe in the special and exclusive character of ecclesiastical priesthood are bound to venerate the Officers invested with those powers, and to submit to their teaching and influence, irrespective of their personality; for they can not only help and strengthen you by administration of the Sacraments: they actually have the power of forgiving your sins,—or, still more remarkable, of preventing the forgiveness of your sins, if they be so minded.

[1] The question of the recognition or non-recognition of Anglican Orders is sometimes said to have been decided like a move in a game or in party politics—after private discussion as to which course was best calculated to benefit one side and to damage the other. The subject appears to be eminently fitted for such treatment.

Baptismal regeneration is only one of the benefits which can be obtained through their agency, but that too is a power of great magnitude, and if your child is to be eternally lost without their aid, their aid must be sought; for in this ceremony he is made, according to the Catechism — not recognised only and admitted into the Church as such, but actually made—a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.[1]

True, they must be regarded only as instruments and vehicles of Divine mercy; but in so far as Divine mercy is felt to be a vital thing, the channels by which it is dispensed become of overwhelming interest; and if they, as Officers of a corporate and divinely ordained Church, really have in any sense a monopoly of the Holy Spirit, their unfolding of the Bible may be the only explication religiously permissible.

It is only those who have no belief in the reality of priestly powers of this kind—people to whom such powers seem like superstition, who prefer to worry out truth for themselves, and who pray directly to the Fountain of Infinite Wisdom to keep them from being deceived and to lead them into the way of truth—it is only these who can afford to dispense with, or in some cases even to resent, the good offices of the

[1] The preposition "in" is used in the Catechism, but "by" occurs in one form of the baptismal service: "Seeing now . . . that this child is by baptism regenerate."

Catholic Church, whether in its Greek or Roman or Anglican branches.

If now we bethink ourselves what is it that constitutes the essential difference of type, I think we shall find that we must admit as the most distinctive feature of the Prayer Book, from the denominational and ultra-protestant point of view, not the ordinary popular services of Mattins and Evensong, nor the still more beautiful form for Holy Communion, but the regulation for the Ordering of Priests. The greater part of that service may be passed as undenominational, save that naturally it seems intended expressly to sever the Anglican from the Roman priesthood, but the official sentence which accompanies the laying on of hands is distinctly and purposely hierarchical. Those who accept that are Churchmen; those who rejoice at it are High-Churchmen. All other details sink into insignificance before this Episcopal pronouncement:

"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained."

This has been said ceremonially to every Anglican parish priest in the British Isles, some of whom doubtless believe that a mysterious efficacy has descended upon them, and that they possess the awful power thus conferred.

That being so, it should be, and probably is, clear to any contending and opposing party that "priests" so consecrated, and animated by such beliefs, cannot possibly consent to open their schools to dissenters: it would be more reasonable for doctors to open the hospitals to quacks. They are bound to insist on their high prerogative, and to teach children to come to them for the sacramental and other inspired influences which they can bestow on the penitent and the faithful, or be false to their trust.[1] And conversely, those who stoutly deny and conscientiously resent the idea of any such special privileges—who quote in opposition, for instance, 1 Cor. i. 17—may feel bound to express their views also, and to do their best to prevent their children from coming under avowedly sacerdotal influence.

The text or texts in the Bible on which an

[1] That they do so insist, can be illustrated by the following:—"Experience has shown the inefficacy of the mere injunctions of Church order, however scripturally enforced, in restraining from schism the awakened and anxious sinner; who goes to a dissenting preacher 'because (as he expresses it) he gets good from him': and though he does not stand excused in God's sight for yielding to the temptation, surely the ministers of the Church are not blameless if, by keeping back the more gracious and consoling truths provided for the little ones of Christ, they indirectly lead him into it. Had he been taught as a child, that the Sacraments, not preaching, are the sources of Divine Grace; that the Apostolical ministry had a virtue in it which went out over the whole Church, when sought by the prayer of faith; that fellowship with it was a gift and privilege, as well as a duty, we could not have had so many wanderers from our fold, nor so many cold hearts within it" (Advt. to *Tracts for the Times*, 1834).

absolution dogma is based must be held responsible for a good deal of the perennial conflict between Church and Dissent. It may be possible for Biblical critics to say that John xx. 21–23 is a later insertion, like Matt. xvi. 19 and the end of Mark; but assuming the most orthodox possible view, and taking the record of the words about the forgiveness and the retention of sins as exact, it is open even to devout Literalists to argue against the modern use of such a formula, somewhat as follows: "By whom," they might ask, "were these words spoken to the disciples? Not by Jesus of Nazareth in the flesh, but by the risen Lord just before His Ascension and Session at the right hand of God. That which He could say then, to those whom He was leaving comfortless for the ten days between His departure and the feast of Pentecost, is now said by every bishop of the Church. But it does not follow that what could be said once, under exceptional circumstances, is suitable for indefinite repetition." Thus might opponents contend; and their contention might have to be admitted as true, and the modern use of the formula virtually explained away, save by a few extremists who still adhere to its surface interpretation.

Hence there is a well-marked cause of difference, and justification of a militant attitude. How then can it be hoped to effect formal reconciliation of the two religious types? At first

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sight, only in one of two ways: either by general admission of justification for a sacerdotal claim of this kind; or, on the other hand, by the equally improbable admission of the imaginary character of any sort of basis for such a claim—a perception that, though it has survived the shocks of time, and come down the centuries to our own day, it is yet a human imagination, and essentially false.

Taken in its literal and bald signification, the ordination sentence above quoted would be intolerable to a Low or to a Broad Churchman; consequently he must be able to interpret it otherwise. He would doubtless claim that it signifies the right to declare the judgment of the Christian conscience, or at any rate of the Christian Church, as to details of right and wrong: to formulate, in fact, the judgments of the Holy Spirit, under whose guidance he is henceforth to act. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum.* It is not, however, a barren formula removed from practice: it enters into the pastoral work of the priest, and is applied to sick persons in the following form:

"By his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, In the name," etc.

Even this, however, though challenged by John Henry Newman, and regarded by him as inadmissible save under the Roman ægis, is doubtless capable of refining interpretation. And so it is with all the formularies—else it were

impossible for great and good men, to whom the natural sense of some of them must be repugnant, to hold office in the Church to-day. Let it be admitted, once for all, that saving and minimising interpretations are known and utilised by many of those inside the pale; and I shall assume, without question now, that they are justified in these interpretations under the circumstances. But those outside the pale, and those who are hesitating to enter it, are liable to take these formulæ more nearly at their face-value, and to mistrust ingenuity of interpretation. Wherefore —and that is my point—such formulæ act as obstacles, as weapons of exclusion, and as causes of dissension and bitterness; even among those who in all essentials agree. And they have another function, perhaps equally harmful: they encourage extreme sacerdotal pretensions in a few exceptionally constituted persons, who, whatever may be their saintly character, are in disaccord with the religious ideals of the nation. So much so, indeed, that they might find their proper place in another and a foreign communion.

Seeing, therefore, that such formulæ may do harm, it is open to question whether they do a compensating amount of good. Words, such as those above quoted, either mean something definite, or they do not. If they confer any real power, if they give real strength to the Church, they must be retained; but if they serve no

useful purpose, if they signify only what is naturally to be expected without them—namely, the power of appreciating and fostering the good, of detecting and condemning the bad, which is possessed by every decent man—if they are only a difficulty to be boggled at and explained away, they constitute a weakness, not a strength, and it is surely desirable to have them changed.

In any case it is quite absurd for either side in the controversy—the ancient controversy between Catholic and Protestant, between Priest and Presbyter, between High Anglican and Free Churchman, between upholders of public ritual and insisters on private conscience, between the objective and the subjective types of worshippers, between those who lay stress on Brotherhood and those who emphasise the individual life—it is futile for either side to pretend that the other side is wicked and schismatic and alienated from God. So perhaps there is a third course—what some think the fatal course of compromise—in which the permanent vitality of the two types of religious humanity is recognised, and something of absolute truth admitted to be visible from both points of view. In which case it might not be too much to hope that the two groups, no longer hostile, could ultimately agree to live together in harmony, as two wings of an enlarged National Church; without need for anyone to abandon the phase of truth, or the form of worship, which specially

appeals to his disposition and theological understanding. At present there are Nonconformists, obedient to private judgment and disobedient to authority, at both ends of the Church of England: —those whose forefathers left it when what they considered too much superstition was enforced; and those who, without leaving it, feel conscientiously impelled to ignore both lay jurisdiction and episcopal "admonition" when obedience to regulations is demanded by the State in return for privilege.

I do not venture to suggest inclusion in a National Church of those who take a non-national view of their civil obligations. No question of union or of adaptation can be entertained on behalf of those who regard a foreign Potentate and foreign Conclave as supreme authority and fount of inspiration. It is not indeed possible for them to join a merely National Church, however closely their creed and practices may approach one section of it on the purely religious side: a certain canon—which I presume is still in force —to wit, that subjects of a temporal ruler disapproved by the Roman Church may be relieved of allegiance to their Sovereign, and that the promulgation of unacceptable doctrine is to be suppressed with a high hand — constitutes a sufficient obstacle.[1] It is far from desirable that

[1] The Lateran Council decree, above referred to, part of the Roman Canon Law, is quoted below, and was guarded against in the English Church by the oath of the King's sovereignty ad-

any ecclesiastical gauntlet which investigators of truth may have to run should in the smallest degree be backed up by the power of the State. But no such difficulty arises when contemplating a reincorporation of the Free Churches which have divaricated and grown up in consequence of a long spell of intolerant bigotry culminating in an Act of disruption in 1662. Many of them could easily rejoin one pole of a National Church if the nation sought to attract them, or at least ceased to repel them by an enforced uniformity. The Legislature now conspicuously shrinks from interference with liberty of con-

ministered on the ordination of deacons, which used to run thus :— "I *A. B.* do swear, that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable Doctrine and Position, That Princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any Authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their Subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do declare, that no foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State, or Potentate, hath, or ought to have, any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence, or Authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual, within this Realm. *So help me God.*"

This is the wording of the decree: "Let the secular powers, whatever offices they may exercise . . . exterminate from the territories under their jurisdiction heretics of all kinds marked out by the Church. . . . But if any temporal ruler, being required and admonished by the Church, shall neglect to purge his land from this heretical filth, let him be bound in the chain of excommunication by the metropolitan and other bishops of the province. And if he shall disdain to make satisfaction within a year, let this be signified to the Supreme Pontiff, that he may declare the vassals of that ruler henceforth released from their allegiance, and may offer the land to occupation by Catholics, who, having exterminated the heretics, may possess it in peace and preserve it steadfast in the Faith."

science, and must recognise that it made mistakes in the past whenever it consented to be coaxed or coerced into narrowness and brutality in matters of faith. It would surely welcome a movement towards breadth and reintegration, if it were favoured by both sides to the ancient quarrel.

There is the more hope for some such solution, inasmuch as none but a bigot could claim to grasp in his own person the whole truth concerning a subject of infinite magnitude, or could suppose that the precise form of worship most suited to himself must necessarily be dominant throughout the cosmos. Wherefore it might be recognised, by reasonable persons on either side, that the manifest enthusiasm and religious fervour of those from whom they differ, far from being the fruit of falsehood and error, are sustained by the genuine sap of Divine truth; though by a kind for which their own emotional and æsthetic nature happens to be unfitted.

The possibility of such a *concordat* may at first sight seem remote, but it is worth more than momentary consideration, and it is possible to detect more reasonableness embedded in the proposal than appears on the surface.

First of all, then, let us ask, is it true that any worshipper, however spiritually minded, can dispense altogether with material facts as an aid to the expression and realisation of spiritual truth, and as an external stimulus to the attitude of

worship? Can the spiritual and the material, in fact, be entirely discriminated and separated? I will not inquire whether such separation is or is not desirable; I will not point out how much loss would be sustained if it were practicable—how fatal to half of human nature such an achievement would immediately be; but I will simply ask, is it ever done, as a fact? I believe that a little consideration will show that it is never really accomplished,—that some material agent is active even in the most refined and spiritual perceptions. It will at least be admitted that in the case of religiously minded persons the sights and sounds of nature awaken a sense of Divine presence. And the same feelings may be roused by hearing of some human action, or by meeting other human beings with whom they are in sympathy. Some men are carried Godward by beauty, others by truth, others by goodness; and some even by the commonplace actions of daily life. A remarkable face, casually encountered, or a word even from a stranger, has been known occasionally to call up thoughts akin to worship, even in the most unritualistic follower of George Fox.

> "Just when we are safest, there's a sunset-touch,
> A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
> As old and new at once as nature's self,
> To rap and knock and enter in our soul."
>
> (Browning: *Bishop Blougram's Apology*).

If there be any truth in the suggestion—and it is a question which must be answered by each for himself, it can hardly be put in a form that will equally apply to every individual—then an essential feature of the sacramental efficacy of material or external things, when spiritually regarded and transfigured in the light of a dominating faith, is admitted. For material means whereby the soul can be elevated, and brought into conscious relation with Deity, are essentially of the nature of sacraments.

"To attempt to grasp the infinite by reason," says Plotinus, "is futile; it can only be known in immediate presence. The faculty by which the mind divests itself of its personality is *Ecstasy*. In ecstasy the soul becomes loosed from its material prison, separated from individual consciousness, and becomes absorbed in the Infinite Intelligence from which it emanated." This condition of Inspiration, direct Intuition, or Enthusiasm,—some approach to what is meant by "seeing God,"—is but transitory, and may be rare, but it can be induced by a great variety of instrument. A few attain it during the contemplation of law and order enshrined in a mathematical expression, or in some comprehensive philosophic formula; but to many the transfiguring and revealing experience is heralded by the song of birds, by sunshine upon grass, by the wind in tree-tops, or by the wild solitude of mountains. To one the vision comes during the

music of an orchestra or the sight of a great work of art; to another, the atmosphere of a Gothic cathedral is full of it; while to another, again, the same cathedral must contain lights and incense in order effectively to act as a medium. To many the acts of common worship are an invaluable aid; and they find their fullest help towards realising the Divine presence in the consecrated materials of a purposely arranged and specially organised Sacrament.

The means of grace last mentioned—being consciously directed to a desired end—must be considered as specially forcible and effective; at any rate for those who are constituted in such a way as to appreciate accessories and aids of this kind. But it is not to be denied that, in spite of good intention, these ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies strike another type of religious disposition as too humanly ingenious to foster divine thoughts; which with these people arise in more spontaneous fashion, amid the simplicity of plain buildings, or among the solitudes of unconsecrated nature.

> "Each cloud-capped mountain is a holy altar,
> An organ breathes in every grove."

It must be admitted, however,—and I presume that Nonconformists would be the last to deny it,—that there is always a danger lest, if human effort and organisation be altogether discarded, as they sometimes are by religiously minded secularists, the opportunities for spontaneous

awakening of religious thoughts may seldom or never occur; and so gradually the power of entertaining lofty ideas may become atrophied by lack of use. Moreover, those who depend entirely on the capacities of their own unaided individual soul may find, in times of stress, a sad emptiness and dearth of comfort there. That is at once the weakness and the strength of an emphatically spiritual religion: it makes a severe demand on the worshippers' own powers and faculties. This constitutes a weakness,—for there come times when the spirit is so harassed by the troubles and trials of existence that even the stoutest cannot stand the strain; but it constitutes also a strength,—inasmuch as it braces and exercises and develops the fibres of the character.

There will always be those who are impressed with, not so much the right, as the duty, of private judgment; and on the other hand there will always be those who feel the need of authority. In the same way we must recognise a constitutional difference, a difference of temperament, a difference of response to diverse appeals. But the difference is only dependent on "accident" or appropriateness of vehicle: it is not a difference of really fundamental character; and though it is natural to prefer one form of material accessory to another, it is not human, at least it is not religious, to despise and reject them all.

It is perhaps not known to everybody that the general nature of a sacrament is recognised by

the English Church—very likely by the Roman Church too,—for it is definitely laid down in the "Homilies" that in a certain sense there may be many sacraments:

"Therefore neither it, nor any other sacrament else, be such sacraments as Baptism and Communion are; but in a general acception the name of a sacrament may be attributed to anything whereby an holy thing is signified" (*Homily on Common Prayer and Sacraments*).

Wherefore, opponents may ask, Why not then carry out this doctrine into practice? Why not insist on the sacramental character of every material vehicle of spiritual influence? Why urge the importance of two, or of seven?

One orthodox answer is that the two are "necessary to salvation,"—a doctrine corresponding with the over-literal misreading of a text, and not really believed any more than the corresponding "Athanasian" clauses are believed. But a better answer, and indeed the answer of Christendom generally with few exceptions, is that the two were in a special sense authorised and enjoined by Christ; so in order to estimate their crucial character it is instructive to consider how these special sacraments arose. It is easy to add an element of mysticism to the bare facts, and those who make this addition may claim it as a sign of spiritual growth; but the mystical interpretation should be voluntary, it cannot wisely be enforced on every Christian. The bare facts

themselves may be legitimately and inoffensively regarded somewhat as follows:

Jesus found the old baptismal act of ceremonial washing revived and used as a sign of repentance by his great precursor,—either as a symbolic cleansing, or else as a symbolic burying to sin and new birth to righteousness (for both significations can be attached to the rite of immersion); and, instinctively recognising the advantage of associating divine thoughts with so common an act as bathing or washing, he submitted himself to it: thereby canonising it among Christians for all time. But then he utilised many common things for doctrinal purposes, — such as the sower and the seed, fishermen's nets, a marriage feast, and other ordinary incidents of life; though here the Church, perhaps fortunately, has been slower to follow to the full extent. I say fortunately, because it has sometimes tended to over-emphasise the crucial importance of its adopted ceremonies. That baptism is a ceremony of admission is obvious; that it may have a Pentecostal virtue is possible; but—as everyone admits now—to regard any such rite as essential to salvation is superstitious; and a dogma of that kind has before now stretched Christian allegiance to breaking point.

In the other case also there have been times when the Church emphatically went beyond and exceeded its instructions, to what many think a lamentable extent; at times even daring to inflict

torture and death on those who could not travel with it along this humanly extended road. For the common act of eating and drinking was among those conspicuously sanctified by Christ; on that pathetic occasion when, after long discourse on his approaching fate, and much figurative speech concerning the necessity for complete union with himself, he took up the bread and the wine, no doubt blessing them after the still extant Jewish fashion, and then—with a clear reference to the sacrifices of flesh and blood familiar in their scriptures and in the present passover—added, in a moment of enthusiasm fraught with strange destiny for the future Church, "This is my flesh and this is my blood. Bless it, and take it, and remember me whenever henceforth ye feed together." As for himself, this was his last food and his last drink—a long spasm of torture and hunger and thirst was all that lay before him on earth—"I shall taste no more of the fruit of the vine till I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of my Father."

Regarded simply and naturally, it is a gracious domestic ceremony; akin to the toast of good fellowship, with the sadness of pain and parting commingled, and expressive of the potential equality of the whole human family. It was surely intended as an act of union and brotherhood, not as a testing instrument or dividing engine. Common participation in a single loaf is recognised by St. Paul (1 Cor. x. 17) as a symbol

of the oneness of the many in the Christian body —a true *communion.*

Looked at from the point of view of subsequent history, and what human organisation has made of it, even devout worshippers must admit that superstition has been prone to enter, and that its ecclesiastical developments have been at times painful beyond description.

Yet that should not prevent those who prefer not to partake of an ecclesiastically administered sacrament from recognising that to others it constitutes the very bread of life, and that to worshippers of this character the meaning and efficacy of the symbols are enhanced beyond measure by ceremonial observance and ritual.

What has been said about sacraments can be interpreted as applying to priesthood also. A priest is a vehicle of the Holy Ghost, an interpreter of divine things, and a helper towards higher life. Priesthood is a reality; but, if my interpretation of it be correct, it cannot be a professional monopoly. Like genius, it evades definition; but it is not likely to be coercible and transmissible by ceremonial means. Surely it must be true that the Spirit moveth where it listeth, and is not amenable to clerical control.

Every man, woman, or child who has the power of elevating the thought of another human being, everyone who is chosen to act as a channel of the Divine Spirit, is for the time a priest. It

may be well to set aside and train and guard a band of persons who feel specially called to this high office; in the hope that through discipline and service their powers of true priesthood and sainthood may increase. It is desirable that the Church should set store by and guard its ministers, just as it guards its sacraments, from pollution and contamination with the things of the outer world. Precautionary and reverential arrangements are humanly intelligible, and more or less necessary, but they are not essential; they are matters of ecclesiastical polity, not of divine ordinance.

The Church recognises, indeed, that every man is in some small sense a priest in his own household, and admits that in times of emergency he may act as such, up to the point of administering the minor sacrament of Baptism, provided he employs the right material and the authorised form of words. But, save for this charitable exception, it jealously guards its own rites and privileges, and denies apostolic authority to all save those whom it has itself ordained: thereby and to that extent appearing to claim a monopoly of the Holy Spirit,—a claim which, in the judgment of many, it cannot sustain; although seemly professional procedure may be amply justified by public convenience and usage.

So long as specific and special priesthood is recognised as possessed only in a representative capacity, it can do no harm. Harm begins when

an exclusive character is claimed for it. The true official priest is representative or typical of the potential priesthood of all religious humanity,—a symbol of the close connection and affectionate intercourse between God and man: somewhat as Christ was essentially the son of man and son of God, to the exclusion of none of his brethren.

In this form the office is not to be stigmatised as sacerdotal—it is only to be so stigmatised when it claims to be exclusive, when it seeks to be a monopoly of the grace of God.

So also the Eucharist may legitimately be held to represent or typify a Divine Presence, provided it is likewise taught that all nature is the living garment of God, and that space and time are expressions of His thoughts. It is not a claim for the Divine presence, but a claim for the Divine absence — anywhere — that should be resisted.

There is no need for nonconformist feeling in these matters, except in details of administration which may well be made more elastic. Priesthood and sacraments are realities; forms and orderly ceremonies are necessary for collective human worship: it is their exaggeration and misunderstanding that is to be deprecated, not the things themselves. Those who think they are worshipping in spirit only, are really using forms and material aids, though the forms may be of a simple character. An attitude of body, an enforced silence, a gathering together into an

accustomed building, the reading of a book, the singing of a hymn—all these are physical and material aids to spiritual growth, and are therefore essentially sacramental. It is but a question of degree; and those who cannot utilise forms of so simple a character are justified in seeking to invent and enjoy ceremonies of a more elaborate kind.

So also, everyone privileged to act as a minister of God, a true vehicle of the Holy Spirit, is for the time being a priest by right divine. It is only because under present conditions such influence is comparatively rare, that we have to betake ourselves to a professional priesthood. It is a necessity: it is not an ideal. The ideal held out by Christ himself was a high one. "Be ye perfect," he said. Be a Christ, he might have said: be thyself a messenger and revealer of divine truth, up to the measure of thy capacity. "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." He did not say these things to the priests and orthodox worshippers of his own day—to them he said quite other things:—these high injunctions he laid upon a body of trained and chosen peasants who had loved and followed him, and thus ordained them with genuine priesthood.

And to all the animate and inanimate creatures, of earth and air and sea, he gave a message too. On all of them he conferred sacramental efficacy —nothing is unholy or unclean—everything can join in the song of joy and worship that rises from all healthy nature. By his teaching the

whole world of matter is transfigured and glorified before our eyes; it is suffused with immanent Deity, and has become, for those with eyes to see, a mirror of the Almighty.

Now all this, which to most of us is so clear now, was not equally clear to the generality of folk in the times gone by. Saints here and there seized the truth, no doubt, and tried to express it in language fitted to their time; but from the great mass of the people it was hidden. Persons in high office—Archbishop Cranmer and others—put together our liturgy, during a moderately exalted period of English history, utilising many beautiful petitions and formularies, and showing great genius for the work; but it is not to be supposed that they were gifted with infallibility, so that they grasped the truth completely and expressed it for all time. Nor was the Act of Parliament which crystallised and congealed the Prayer Book an inspired document.[1] Admitting that historic forms make a special appeal to the emotions, revision of the Prayer Book on the intellectual side ought to be and is necessary, especially after a century of great intellectual achievement. The question arises whether the time is not ripe for revision now.

[1] Even Newman, in a tract urging no concession or tittle of alteration, says: "I confess that there are few parts of the Service that I could not disturb myself about and feel fastidious at, if I allowed my mind in this abuse of reason."

Loth as I am to meddle with professional and ecclesiastical matters, the present juncture in the history of the English Church and nation, and the display of splendid ambitions and hopes at the recent Pan-Anglican Congress, should encourage all those who recognise the pressing need for social reform, and the great power and influence for good which a truly efficient Church could exert in that direction, to urge a reconsideration of the tests and requirements, implicit or explicit, that are imposed on candidates for Holy Orders in the Church of England at various stages in their career.—The fact that it is a National Church removes the charge of impertinence from the utterance of a layman on such matters.—The spirit of the following sentences, taken from "His Majesty's Declaration" printed in every Anglican Prayer Book, is not attractive to an age which has imbibed the idea of evolution and some conception of the faithful investigation of truth:

. . . "the settled Continuance of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England* now established; from which We will not endure any varying or departing in the least Degree. . . . We will, that all further curious search be laid aside. . . . And that no man hereafter shall either print, or preach, to draw the Article aside any way, but shall submit to it in the plain and full meaning thereof: and shall not put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the Article, but shall take it in the literal and grammatical sense.

"That if any publick Reader in either of Our Universities, or any Head or Master of a College, or any other person respectively in either of them, shall affix any new sense to any Article, or shall publickly read, determine, or hold any publick Disputation, or suffer any such to be held either way, in either the Universities or Colleges respectively; or if any Divine in the Universities shall preach or print any thing either way, other than is already established in Convocation with Our Royal Assent; he, or they, the Offenders, shall be liable to Our displeasure, and the Church's censure in our Commission Ecclesiastical, as well as any other: And We will see there shall be due Execution upon them."

If the Church excludes, and to some extent even if it only threatens to exclude, from its ministry all young men who are unable to accept a system of archaic formulæ as valid,—with whatever saving clauses and subterfuges it dilutes in practice its theoretical requirements,—it may be creating for itself an "unnatural selection," so to speak, a survival or selection of the weakest. And if it does so, then, like any other organism in like case, it must in the long run infallibly degenerate.

I believe that its leaders, its real leaders, admit that it could with advantage amend its procedure in several particulars; especially that it could diminish the amount of mechanical uniformity, and allow some elasticity in the use of a liturgy

which, though fragrant with historical aroma, has now become to many people monotonous and barren. But the chief wish of those who love the idea of a National Church is that it would so modify its entrance barriers, and so simplify its formularies, as to draw to itself more young men of character, intellect, and breadth of view.

Only so can it once more become, what it ought to be and is not, a truly comprehensive National Church,—one flock under one Shepherd,—elevating and sanctifying the State by connexion with it; instead of, what many now consider it, an unholy alliance of mingled constraint and privilege,—hampered in its own actions by the rigidity of its connexion with Parliament, and yet drawing thence so much worldly dignity and social independence as to be regarded with suspicion by an able and energetic portion of a religiously minded nation, whose ministers are excluded from co-operation in the National ceremonies and from official recognition by the State, and who consequently conduct their ministrations at a perceptible disadvantage: a disadvantage which to Newman seemed so serious that he wrote, in 1833: "We know how miserable is the condition of religious bodies not supported by the State."

The difficulties surrounding reform are considerable, though it is possible to exaggerate them; but sooner or later it will be undertaken; and

the exclusiveness of State connexion will be broken down, either by the method of disestablishment, or by that of greater comprehensiveness and union. Would that a movement might be made towards union! Not union in every minor doctrine, nor in every detail of practice, but unison of effort, coupled with clear practical perception of the real needs of the time. To this end artificial boundaries must be broken down, and the domain covered by the National Church must be broadened till it includes all aspiring workers who are casting out devils in the one Name.

But a reformer must not be in haste. The Kingdom cometh not by observation, but by secret working, as of leaven. Nor must he advocate any compromise repugnant to an enlightened conscience. Bigotry must die, but it must die a natural, not a violent, death. Would that the leaders in Church and State had always been able to receive an impatient enthusiast in the spirit of the lines :—

"Dreamer of dreams! no taunt is in our sadness,
Whate'er our fears our hearts are with your cause.
God's mills grind slow; and thoughtless haste were madness,—
To gain Heaven's ends we dare not break Heaven's laws."

CHAPTER VII

A REFORMED CHURCH AS AN ENGINE OF PROGRESS

"Religion was once the pillar of fire which went before the human race in its great march through history, showing it the way. Now it is fast assuming the rôle of the ambulance which follows in the rear and picks up the exhausted and wounded. This, too, is a great work, but it is not sufficient. And when religion has disburdened herself of all her dead values, she will once more, in intimate association with ethics, rise to be a power which leads men forward."—HÖFFDING

IN the preceding chapter I have urged that the re-creation and continuance of a truly National Church must involve a great simplification of Church enactments, so as to leave fair freedom of interpretation concerning the meaning of Christian ceremonies; and that the way to reform lies through a movement of breadth and incorporation, which should consolidate the now prevalent desire for greater tolerance and union.

In the belief that the subject is of great importance, and that the time is nearly ripe for reform, I now wish to proceed further in the same direction, and to urge that, putting less trust in oaths and formularies, we should cease from attempting to bind by anticipation revolting

and unwilling spirits, and show more faith in living humanity — especially in the kind of humanity which feels called to work in the Christian vineyard. There need be no forced alteration of procedure in religious services, but there should be large avoidance of compulsory uniformity. We must admit the existence of worshippers of different types, we must realise the need for growth and development, and must encourage loyalty to the spirit of truth—especially among those who co-operate in good works; in the assurance that, by those who "do the works," all essential doctrine will be sufficiently accepted, without compulsion, in due time.

It may seem inappropriate, and in strict sense impertinent, for a student of science to feel strongly on such topics, but it is an inappropriateness not without precedent. The general welfare of humanity, and the stability of advancing civilisation, are themes of interest to all, whatever our special studies may be; and before now a prophet of Art has felt constrained to urge that artistic development must be stunted, and the highest art impossible, until social conditions are improved. So also some Socialist writers, with the ear of the populace, condemn a peaceful absorption in scientific pursuits, amid the surrounding mass of poverty and misery, as a mark of selfishness and hard-heartedness. What is the good of abstruse scientific theories, they say, when what people need is wholesome food

and warmth and decent homes! And the thoughts of many a would-be student are perturbed in the same way. These good and sympathetic people vicariously feel the pressure of life so keenly that no occupation save relieving the pain seems worth while. Their lives and sympathies are so absorbed and exhausted in the tormenting problems of a great city, under present conditions, that they grow to regard the multifarious interests of the world through the perspective of the victim on the rack, to whom but one thing is needful.

But I lay no particular stress on a likelihood of injury to knowledge, through prevalent lack of sympathy with pure science and ignorance of its intrinsic value, nor on any other merely intellectual obstacle; that is not the sort of thing which paralyses activity and acts as a constant sore. If society were in a healthy condition, if the development and elevation of man did not take a secondary and quite subordinate place to the development and accumulation of property, a few generations of better education could easily mend it on the intellectual side; but it is the greedy and essentially uncivilised condition of what prides itself as the most practical part of society, and the consequent deep-rooted and unadmitted canker eating into the bones of the social organism, that is disquieting and oppressive.

It is against all this that a National Church

ought to be fighting. If these evils are to be uprooted, I cannot see how the uprooting can be done by a single reformer or prophet—a Carlyle, a Ruskin, or a Morris—here and there; they must be attacked by an organised army of workers and thinkers, imbued with the right spirit, informed as to the real facts, devoted to the cause of goodness, and trained for the detection of long-accustomed errors and for the development of human life.

An efficient contingent of such an army exists, or should exist, in the churches of every denomination. Here are men picked out, we must suppose, for their keen perception of right and wrong, for their enthusiasm and longing after higher life,—men who are subjected to special training for the work, and then sent as missionaries throughout the whole range of society, to preach Christ's Gospel and to bring the Kingdom of Heaven into realisation upon earth. Here should be a general staff of commanding power, if only it is in real touch with the people, if only it realises the extent and the quality of its mission, and is properly prepared to cope with it. But it must concentrate its weapons upon the enemy, and must not employ them in internecine warfare. An army whose officers dispute among themselves, whose horse and foot are in conflict, and whose artillery is trained upon its engineers, is not an efficient instrument of conquest.

Those who realise to some extent what a

power for good a truly National Church might be, and how with comparative ease the earnest religious spirit of England could absorb and utilise the energies of such a Church—a truly Christian and truly comprehensive Church, with the best men attracted, not repelled, with the present mechanical uniformity superseded by a reasonable freedom, with errors of past history discarded, mean jealousies extinguished, and differences composed—such persons may feel that through the reform and strengthening of the Church lies the best though not the most direct route towards elimination of the wrongs and amelioration of the evils of our social state. At present many of the thinking workers are alienated from what they imagine is religion; and a cry for general secularisation is gaining ground. The State may be rightly urged to have nothing to do with controversial religion; but the elimination of religious disputes, and the elimination of religion, are not necessarily the same thing. The cessation of all recognition of religion itself by the State is certainly not a step in the right direction.

The cry for disestablishment is not loud just now; but it is liable to be raised at any time, so long as the present condition of special privilege continues. The cry is really a cry for more equality of treatment—for more national recognition all round. Only a few want to separate all religion from the State; though

many might rejoice at freedom from so-called Erastian control. A section of Presbyterians north of the Tweed may feel conscientiously opposed to State-connexion of any kind, and some Nonconformists may imagine that they feel conscientious objection; but that is not the real bugbear in England; it is the limitation and narrowness of the connexion that is really objected to. Broaden the Church out till it is truly national, by removing the preposterous coercion in detail which is now nominally exercised,—and the grievance disappears. The National Church could then absorb the best activities of all denominations, and the nation would be strengthened on its highest side to an incalculable extent. Efforts at betterment of human conditions are precarious and difficult and rather blind, so long as mutual hostility or suspicion persists among the branches of the Christian Church.

Either corporate action towards amelioration is impossible; or the Church, in the most comprehensive sense, should be the most powerful army for good in existence. Its ministers are like officers distributed throughout the country, with social prestige and the attentive ear of a large proportion of the more leisured and opulent classes; and these Officers should be engaged, even more than at present, in training and enlarging and disciplining the forces of progress,—ready for a re-birth of society.

Herein lies, I believe, the most vital reform

of all; but it is not a reform that can be procured by direct aim; it must arrive spontaneously after attraction of the ablest to the ministry. The nation should demand the Ministry of its best men—in the Church as well as in the Cabinet.

And the reform contemplated should be real and genuine; the Confession of sin repeated in ecclesiastical buildings should be no conventional and meaningless chant, nor should it be supposed to apply only to individual and personal sinfulness; it should above all, in collective worship, apply to collective sin,—to that sinfulness of society which Christ would denounce if he came again among us. The vigour of that denunciation would, I expect, eclipse anything now heard from pulpits; though it would, I believe, take an unpopular and unexpected direction, and concern itself less with the weaknesses and follies and half-repented sins of humanity, than with the greed, the selfishness, the sheer individualism and mammon-worship which excite but occasional reprobation; it would attack the heartless and contented acquiescence in conditions which debase the soul of a people and erect the extravagant luxury of a few on the grinding poverty of many.

"We are verily guilty concerning our brother."

In that sense an acknowledgment of fault is indeed urgently and constantly needed; but the feeling should be driven home and made real;

confession should never be allowed to degenerate into an easy perfunctory form. The selfishness of society is the really burning sin of our time, and it is the more dangerous because so generally unrecognised. It has been unrecognised in the chancel as well as in the nave—it seems never to have been adequately recognised by an Established Church as a whole—and to this one cause such a Church may owe much of its impotence; to this is due some of the mistrust felt for the Church by the people, who have often found it in the past taking sides, against themselves, with the rich and powerful;—an attitude singularly different from that of its Master. That inspired song the "Magnificat" struck the keynote of primitive Christianity.

Let us freely and heartily admit that a great internal effort is now being made to revive the early spirit in the Church—the spirit of brotherhood and social work. But yet there is room! The enthusiasm and exertion of some Anglican leaders are beyond praise, and in time their spirit will permeate the whole mass. Wherever the right spirit exists, the people respond to it, as they did in A.D. 30. Christ's teachings frequently dealt with the subject of riches, even then, when vast accumulations were hardly feasible, save in a form accessible to the ravages of moth and rust; but with the invention of stocks and shares the possibilities of property have enlarged, and His social principles are now

cordially welcomed by some who do not profess and call themselves Christians. There are men — men of influence among the artisans —who openly scoff at what they call religion, who nevertheless plead "not guilty" for the downtrodden victims of pernicious surroundings; who insist that if not "keepers" we are at least brothers; who really long for a fairer and wholesomer setting for the life of human beings, and who have been repelled from Christianity, not by the teachings of Christ himself, but by the confusions and errors of his nominal disciples. These men call out for the clergy to be "converted to Christianity." What do they mean? It were perhaps well for ministers of all denominations to consider what they mean.

Doubtless in so speaking they are to some extent making the same mistake as is made by those whose objection to unharassed scientific work is mentioned on p. 139. For just as strenuous intellectual concentration needs eyes temporarily shut to the mass of avoidable misery and pain—pain caused by human stupidity and by almost inhuman selfishness, to which every one must shut his eyes at times, or life were impossible—so the clergy must at times possess their souls in peace and comfort; they have to minister to believers and sinners and saints, as well as to contend against hypocrites and pharisees and servants of Mammon. The Church cannot *only* struggle and fight, it must sometimes stretch out its hands

toward the farther shore, unhindered by differences and controversies, and unburdened by the sense of social wrong and degradation. Not all services need be mission services; every now and then saints may allow their souls to expand in mystic worship of the Supreme, and may aim at devout contemplation and ecstasy; on certain days their "Divine Service" might properly be limited to the ecclesiastical and esoteric kinds which now all but monopolise that splendid name.

But worship must not be the chief employment of their lives; not while present evils continue. The Church must be militant if it is to become triumphant; it must learn strategy, and must throw its forces in the right direction. Right belief is intensely important but is slow of attainment, and, for the present, right action is more prominently called for. It is no time for vegetating and mere leaf-development: it is fruits that will be looked for. There must be far less of "Whosoever will be saved must thus *think*," and far more of "Whosoever will save others must thus *do*." God's in His heaven truly, but all is not right with the world. Books written to-day immerse us, and rightly immerse us, in a welter of poverty and misery. The bitter cry of the victims of competition, of the outcasts of civilisation, and of the children who are born to sin and wretchedness, when they are not born to death,—the cry of multitudes with hardly any chance of decent happiness and no outlook

upon the beauty of this world,—this cry must be ringing in the ears of God, till He cannot hear the chants of the churches, however musically they may be intoned, however frequently they may be repeated, and however completely the Ornaments-rubric may be obeyed. The spirit of greed is abroad; its net has gathered human beings together in heaps, has removed them from the fields and hedgerows, and has forced them into crowded dens. With success this spirit is doing devil's work; it and its ally, smug self-satisfied stupidity, are the modern fiends; these are the Satans with which the Church should be fighting (Amos viii., and v. 21–25).

What we have to learn is that the will of God is to be done on earth; that the Kingdom of Heaven is to be a present kingdom, here and now, not relegated always to the future. Eternity is not something in the future, any more than it is something in the past: it extends into the future and it extends into the past — without limit both ways, — but *this* is eternity, this moment we are alive, and the message of Christ relates to "*is*," not to "*will be*." The present is the only opportunity for a deed. We are to aim at the highest here. If not here in this condition, why anywhere in any condition? For wherever we are will always be "here," and the time will always be "now." As soon as God's will is done on earth as it is done in heaven, a great part of the distinction between the two

states of existence is abolished. That diminution of distinction is what the terrestrial Church has to strive to accomplish; that is the ultimate object of its inspiration and its labour: the ideal is to be made real, the world is to be transfigured and transformed. The task of the prophet is the reconciliation, in our consciousness, of self, the world, and God.

It is with a knowledge of a mass of feeling and effort, some of it at present soured and hostile to religion by what used to be preached from pulpits, but genuine in its love for humanity and desire to befriend it, that—using the word "Church" in the broadest sense, as the combined and corporate society of good men in action, — men whose lives and energies are devoted to the highest aims, in the spirit of real and effective and universal Christianity—I urge that if the nation is to be regenerated, it must be regenerated through the agency of The Church. Religious differences must be sunk in union of effort and conscious singleness of aim.

But how great a change is needed! Contrasting the work that is to be done with the means adopted in too many cases for avoiding the doing of it, a prophet would be justified in exclaiming to the churches, and to the Church of this country, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!" Is there not a movement, even now? Surely the message has been heard!

Divine Service

The popular notion of Divine Service makes it consist of a multiplicity of so-called "services," which are too often no service at all, but recreation or sensuous enjoyment to those engaged in them; —a kind of service perhaps as unacceptable to the Deity, under existing circumstances, as those other religious ceremonies inveighed against by the first Isaiah, in a period of less opportunity and responsibility than the present, when, as now, it could be said of a large part of society, "every one loveth gifts and followeth after rewards . . ." and the cry of the oppressed is not heard even at the temple altars:

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices . . . who hath required this at your hands? . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me. . . . Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. . . . When ye make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek justice, set right the oppressor, relieve the oppressed. Come now, let us reason together."

The Church was not founded by temple services, nor will it grow in that way. An exceptional Forty Days, for the strengthening of the soul, and invigoration or insurance of its dominion over the body, must be wholesome and right; and other times of seclusion, as means to ends, are more than justified; but it is as means to an end that they should be regarded,—and the end

is nothing less than the reform of social abuses, and the rescue of humanity from the damning conditions of hopeless and degrading squalor.

The kind of society which allows its children to be befouled and degraded and brought up in an atmosphere of crime, is the kind of society that is likely to be dealt with by a millstone and a rope. If it uses its fresh human material as manure, it may flourish in a rank way, it may shoot up a coarse and luxuriant growth, it may yield a crop of millionaires; but some kinds of fruit are too unwholesome for rational cultivation, some crops are of little use except as fuel; there are trees which must be hewn down and cast into the fire.

Religious bodies may pride themselves on the soundness and orthodoxy of their beliefs; but "he that doeth righteousness is righteous"; and reputable beliefs are no compensation for scandalous results, either to society or to an individual. To speak strictly, such results are inconsistent with healthy beliefs—"do well will follow thought" if the thought be of the right kind; and there is high authority for the uselessness of merely crying Lord, Lord! It is deeds far more than creeds that humanity demands; or rather, it is creeds interpreted and acted out in deeds. We have to *discover*, but we have also to *realise*. We should not be content either with form without substance, or with substance without form. An idea must be incarnated before it is

effective. That is how Christianity was founded, when the Logos was made flesh,

> "And so the Word had breath, and wrought
> With human hands the creed of creeds
> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought."

Nothing less than a re-incarnation of the Logos will reinvigorate the faith of Christendom and carry forward the salvation of mankind. That is the meaning of the Second Advent. As ministers and stewards of the mysteries, it is in our power to make ready the way; that is what our enlightenment and education and privileges are for. Man, though a little lower than the angels, is a messenger and servant of God just as truly, and his high mission is manifest. We as a nation have gone already into the ends of the earth; let us see to it that we understand and carry out rightly our great commission, in no narrow and iconoclastic spirit: remembering also that, unless we set things right at home, our teaching both at home and abroad will be ineffective, and may be charged with hypocrisy. The second Incarnation will be in the hearts of all men—a reign of brotherhood and love for which the heralds are already attuning their songs. Already there are "signs of his coming and sounds of his feet"; and upon our terrestrial activity the date of this Advent depends. Even so come, Lord, quickly.

SECTION III—THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

SECTION III—THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL[1]

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRANSITORY AND THE PERMANENT

"If a man is shut up in a house, the transparency of the windows is an essential condition of his seeing the sky. But it would not be prudent to infer that, if he walked out of the house, he could not see the sky because there was no longer any glass through which he might see it."—M'TAGGART, *Some Dogmas of Religion*, p. 105

DR. M'TAGGART, in his book called *Some Dogmas of Religion*, from which I have taken the excellent apologue[2] prefixed as a sort of motto to this chapter says some things with which I am not able wholly to agree. I should like to deal with these at greater length in some other connexion, but meanwhile I will quote one of them. In his chapter on Human Immortality

[1] The substance of this section was given as the first lecture on the Drew Foundation established in connexion with Hackney College, London, under the presidency of Dr. Forsyth.

[2] This must not be understood as sustaining what Mr. Haldane derisively calls the "window" theory of the senses, as if they were apertures through which an inner man looked out at an alien universe: a parable must not be pressed unduly.

he says that an affirmative answer to the question, "Has man an immortal soul?" would be absurd. He wishes to maintain that man *is* a soul rather than that he *has* one, seeing that the possessive case would indicate that the man's body, or something that died with the body, was his true self, and that it was a property rather than a self, which at death was set free.

But if we make the correlative statement, and say that "man has a body," surely we are stating an undeniable truth. And as to what man himself is—I apprehend that he is a union of soul and body; and that without the one or the other he is incomplete as a man, and becomes something else—a corpse perhaps, a spirit perhaps, or it may be both. But whereas the two were necessarily united during the man's life, death separates them; and the final product, whatever it is, can be described as "man" no longer. Hence the form of the question preferred by Dr. M'Taggart, "Are men immortal?" does not seem to me so appropriate as the more popular and antique form, "Is the soul immortal?" For surely without hesitation everybody must give to his question, about man, the answer: "Not wholly," or "Not every part of him." Part of what constitutes human nature is certainly mortal. On one side man undoubtedly belongs to the animal kingdom, and flourishes on this planet, the Earth, by aid of particles of terrestrial matter which he assimilates for that purpose.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

By the soul, then, we must mean that part of man which is dissociated from the body at death: that part which distinguishes a living man from a corpse. It may be said that it is really more an inter-relation than a part, and that this inter-relation is what is meant by vitality; so that it has been roundly asserted that the apparently disappeared "vitality" is a non-entity or figment of the imagination, and that to speak of it as still existing is like speaking of the "horologity" of a clock which someone has smashed with a hammer.

Very well, if we admit that vitality is a mere relation between the body and something else, it is just the nature of this "something else" that we are discussing; and it is no help to start by assuming that this unknown something is the man himself, any more than it is helpful to start with the equally gratuitous assumption that the visible and tangible body is the man himself.

The vanished constituent, with its attributes, may turn out to be more intimately characteristic of, and essential to, the man's real nature and existence, than is the material investiture which has been discarded without having disappeared: it may turn out to have a more permanent and therefore a more real existence than the temporary vehicle which served to manifest certain of those attributes and properties during man's short tenure of earth life; it may be more especially the seat of his personality and indi-

viduality;—but those are just the things which are subject-matter for debate, and they must not be postulated *à priori.*

As a matter of nomenclature, I want to discriminate between the term "vitality" and the term "life"; to use the former as signifying a union or *relation* between the body and something else, and the latter to denote the unknown entity which by interaction with material particles is responsible for their vitality. True, life, thus defined, is a portion or partial aspect of what is often spoken of as "soul"; but the term life can be used by many to whom some of the associations of the more comprehensive term are objectionable.

The first simple and important truth that must be insisted on, is the commonplace but often ignored and even denied fact, that there is nothing immortal or persistent about the material instrument of our present senses, except the atoms of which it is composed.

Any notion that these same atoms will at some future date be re-collected and united with the dissociated and immaterial portion, so as to constitute once more the complete man as he appeared here on earth, who is thereafter to last for ever,—any notion of that sort, though most unfortunately believed, or at least taught, by one great branch of the Christian Church, is a superstition, not by any means yet really and thoroughly extinct or without influence on senti-

ment, even in quarters where it may be denied in words. It is too much to expect that it should be so extinct.

Nevertheless, the teaching of natural science is in accordance with the teaching of common sense in this matter. The present body is wholly composed of terrestrial particles; it consists of atoms of matter collected from food and air, and arranged in a certain complicated and characteristic form. The elemental atoms are first combined into the complex aggregate called protoplasm,—which is an unstable compound whose chemical constitution is at present unknown, but whose property it is to be always in a state of flux: it is not rigid or stagnant or fixed, but is constantly breaking down into simpler constituents, on one side, and constantly being renewed or built up, on the other, so that it has a kind of life-history, for a certain period. This period of activity, in any given case, lasts as long as the balance between association and dissociation continues. While the balance is tilting in favour of assimilation, we have the period of youth and growth; when the balance begins to tilt in favour of disintegration, we have the beginning of old age and decay; until at a certain, or rather an uncertain, stage, the disintegrating forces gain a final victory, and assimilation wholly and sometimes suddenly ceases. Then presently and by slow degrees the residue of protoplasm left in the body —unless it is speedily incorporated into some

other animal or plant—is resolved into simpler and simpler compounds, and ultimately into inorganic constituents; and so is restored to mother Earth, whence it sprang.

What, then, can be legitimately meant by the phrase "resurrection of the body"? Well, it is highly desirable to disentangle the element of truth which underlies ancient beliefs and is the condition of their durability; and, whatever may be the case with other forms of religion, it is clear that Christianity both by its doctrines and its ceremonies rightly emphasises the material aspect of existence. For it is founded upon the idea of Incarnation; and its belief in some sort of bodily resurrection is based on the idea that every real personal existence must have a double aspect—not spiritual alone, nor physical alone, but in some way both. Such an opinion, in a refined form, is common to many systems of philosophy, and is by no means out of harmony with science.

Christianity, therefore, reasonably supplements the mere survival of a discarnate spirit, a homeless wanderer or melancholy ghost, with the warm and comfortable clothing of something that may legitimately be spoken of as a "body"; that is to say, it postulates a supersensually appreciable vehicle or mode of manifestation, fitted to subserve the needs of future existence as our bodies subserve the needs of terrestrial life: an ethereal or other entity constituting the persistent "other aspect," and fulfilling in the new environment

some of the functions which the atoms of terrestrial matter are constrained to fulfil now. And we may assume, as consonant with, or even as part of, Christianity, the doctrine of the dignity and sacramental character of some physical or quasi-material counterpart of every spiritual essence.

But though some such connexion is essential, any actual instance of it may be accidental and temporary. Take our present incarnation as an example. We display ourselves to our fellows in a certain garb, artificially constructed of animal and vegetable materials, and in the form of a certain material organism, put together by processes of digestion and assimilation, and likewise composed of terrestrial materials. The source of these chemical compounds is evidently not important; nor is their special character maintained. Whether they formed part of sheep or birds or fish or plants, they are assimilated and become part of us; being arranged by our subconscious activities and vital processes into appropriate form, just as truly as other materials are consciously woven into garments, no matter what their origin. Moreover, just as our clothes wear out and require darning and patching, so our bodies wear out; the particles are in continual flux, each giving place to others and being constantly discarded and renewed. The identity of the actual or instantaneous body is therefore an affair of no importance: the body which finally

dies is no more fully representative of the individual than any of the other bodies which have gradually been discarded *en route*: there is no reason why it should persist any more than they: the individuality, if there is one, must lie deeper than any particular body, and must belong to whatever it is which put the particles together in this shape and not another.

There is nothing at all similar to this automatic decay and replacement, this preservation of form amid diversity of particles, in the mechanism of a clock. All that its "horology" could mean would be the special assemblage or grouping of parts which enables it to discharge certain functions, till it wears out, or so long as its worn parts are periodically replaced by the clockmaker. The "vitality" of an organism means this and more, for it can replace its own worn parts. A clock has nothing but material identity, it is not a good illustration of a living organism. The identity of a river yields a closer analogy; and many are the associations which have accordingly gathered round the names "Tiber," "Ganges," "Nile." Rivers have always had attributed to them a kind of poetic personality, though no one can have really supposed them to possess genuine life.

I wish here to make a short digression in order to say that the old and true statement that "everything flows and nothing is stagnant," thus conspicuously exemplified by the material

basis of life, need not in the least signify, as it is sometimes taken to signify, that everything is evanescent and nothing is permanent; still less that everything is fanciful and nothing is real. The ancient aphorism of the inspired Heraclitus makes a statement about existence which is vitally and comprehensively true; and it is a truth which sounds the keynote of Evolution.

To return. The more frankly and clearly the truth about the body is realised, namely, that the body is a flowing and constantly changing episode in material history, having no more identity than has a river, no identity whatever in its material constitution, but only in its form,—identity only in the personal expression or manifestation which is achieved through the agency of a fresh and constantly differing sequence of material particles, —the more frankly all this is realised, the better for our understanding of most of the problems of life and being.

The body is the instrument or organ of the soul: and in its special form and aggregation is certainly temporary,—exceedingly temporary; for in the most durable cases it lasts only about a thousand months—a mere instant in the life-history of a planet.

But if the body is thus trivial and temporary, though while it lasts most beautiful and useful and wonderful, what is it that puts it together and keeps it active and retains it fairly constant through all the vicissitudes of climate and con-

dition, and through all the fluctuations of atomic constitution?

For remember that we are not now dealing with the human body alone. All animals have bodies, and so have plants. All that has been said, of the temporary character of the material aggregate animated by life, applies to a vast variety of organisms which can be encountered on the earth: not to speak of the myriads of other worlds.

What causes the very same particles to be incorporated, first into the form of a blade of grass, then into the form of a sheep, then into the form of a man; then into the form of some low invertebrates—"politic worms" (for whose existence, however, in normal cases there is, I believe, no biological authority),—then perhaps into a bird, then once more into vegetation—perhaps a tree? What is it that combines and arranges the particles, so that if absorbed by root or leaves they correspond to and form the tissue of an oak, if picked up by talons, they help to feed the muscles of an eagle, if cooked for dinner, they enter into the nerves and brain of a man? What is the controlling entity in each case, which causes each to have its own form and not another, and preserves the form constant amid the wildest diversity of particles?

We call it life, we call it soul, we call it by various names, and we do not know what it is. But common sense rebels against its

being "nothing"; nor has any genuine science presumed to declare that it is purely imaginary.

Let us now, therefore, try to define what we mean by "soul"; though in our necessary ignorance the task is not easy. The term is indeed so ambiguous that many may think it is better avoided altogether; but the more precise term "mind" is too narrow and exclusive for our present purpose.

The following definition may sufficiently represent my present meaning: The soul is that controlling and guiding principle which is responsible for our personal expression and for the construction of the body, under the restrictions of physical condition and ancestry. In its higher development it includes also feeling and intelligence and will, and is the store-house of mental experience. The body is its instrument or organ, enabling it to receive and to convey physical impressions, and to affect and be affected by matter and energy.

When the body is destroyed, therefore, the soul disappears from physical ken; when the body is impaired, its function is interfered with, and the soul's physical reaction becomes feeble and unsatisfactory. Thus has arisen the popular misconception that the soul of a slain person, or of a cripple or paralytic, has been destroyed or damaged; whereas only its instrument of manifestation need have been affected. The kind of

evils which really assault and hurt the soul belong to a different category.

It may be said that, in so far as soul is responsible for bodily shape, soul seems identical with the principle of *life*, and that all living things must possess some rudiment of soul.

Well, for myself, I do not see how to draw a hard-and-fast distinction between one form of life and another. All are animated by something which does not belong to the realm of physics and chemistry, but lies outside their province, though it interacts with the material entities of their realm. Life is not matter, nor is it energy, it is a guiding and directing principle; and when considered as incorporated in a certain organism, it, and all that appertains to it, may well be called the soul or constructive and controlling element in that organism.

The "soul" in this sense is related to the organism in somewhat the same way as the "Logos" is related to the universe; it is that without which it does not exist,—that which vivifies and constructs, or composes and informs, the whole.

Moreover, in the higher organisms, the soul conspicuously has lofty potentialities; it not only includes what is connoted by the term "mind," but it begins to acquire some of the character of "spirit"; by which means it becomes related to the Divine Being. Soul appears to be the link between "spirit" and "matter"; and, according to its grade, it may be chiefly associated with one

or with the other of these two great aspects of the universe.

Now let us consider what is meant by Immortality. Is there anything that is not subject to death and annihilation? Can we predicate immortality about anything? Everything is subject to change, but are all things subject to death? Without change there could be no activity, and the universe would be stagnant; but without death it is not so clear that its progress would be obstructed; unless death be only a sort of change.

But is it not a sort of change? Consider some examples: When a piece of coal is burnt and brought to an apparent end, the particles of long-fossilised wood are not destroyed; they enter into the atmosphere as gaseous constituents, and the long-locked-up solar energy is released from its potential form and appears once more as light and heat. The burning of the coal is a kind of resurrection. And yet it is a kind of death too, and to the casual eye nothing is left but ashes.

Take next the destruction of a picture or a statue, let it be torn to pieces or smashed to powder: there is nothing to suggest resurrection about that, and the beautiful form embodied in the material has disappeared.

Such a dissolution is a more serious matter, and may be the result of a really malicious act. It is perhaps the nearest approach to genuine

destruction that is possible to man, and in some cases represents the material concomitant of a hideous crime. True, nothing material is destroyed, the particles weigh just as much as before; yet the expression is gone, the beauty is defaced, an idea perhaps is lost.

But, after all, the idea was never really in the marble or in the pigments; it was embodied or incarnate or displayed by them, in a sense, but it was not really *there*. It was in the mind of the artist who constructed the work, and it entered the mind of the spectators who beheld it,—at least of those who had the requisite perceptive faculty; but it was never in the stone at all. The inert material, from the impress of mind it had received, was able to call out and liberate in a kindred mind some of the original feelings and thoughts which had gone to fashion it. Without a perceptive faculty, without a sympathetic mind, the material was powerless. Set up in, or sent to, a world inhabited only by lower animals, it would convey no message whatever,—it would be wholly meaningless; just as a piece of manuscript would be, in such a world, though it contained the divinest poem ever written.

Nevertheless, by the supposed act of vandalism a certain incarnation of beauty has been lost to the world. Though even so it is not destroyed out of the universe: it remains the possession of the artist, and of those privileged to sympathise with him.

Consider next the destruction of a tree or of an animal. Here again the particles remain as many as before, it is only their arrangement that is altered; the matter is conserved, but has lost its shape; the energy is constant in quantity, but has changed its form. What has disappeared? The thing that has disappeared is the life—the life which appeared to be in the tree or the animal, the life which had composed or constructed it by aid of sunshine and atmosphere, and was manifested by it. Its incarnate form has now gone—no more will that life be displayed amidst its old surroundings,—it has disappeared from our ken; apparently it has disappeared from the universe. Has it gone out of existence altogether?

If it were really generated *de novo*, created out of nothing, at the birth of the animal or of the tree, we should be entitled to assume that at death it may have returned to the nonentity whence it came.

But why nonentity? What do we know of nonentity? Is it a reasonable or conceivable idea? Things when they vanish are only hidden. And so conversely: it is readily intelligible that some existence, some bodily presentation, can be evoked out of a hidden or imperceptible or latent or potential existence, and be made actual and perceptible and what we call real. Instances of that sort are constantly occurring. It occurs when a composer produces a piece of music, it occurs

when an artisan constructs a piece of furniture, it occurs when a spider spins a web, and when the atmosphere deposits dew. But what example can we think of where existence is created out of nonentity, where nothing turns into something? We can think of plenty of examples of change, of organisation, of something apparently complex and highly developed arising out of a germ apparently simple; but there must always be at least a seed, or nothing will arise; nothing can come out of nothing: something must always have its origin in something.

A radium atom is an element possessing in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Every now and then it explodes and fires off a portion of itself. This can occur several times in succession, and finally it seems to become inert and to cease to be radium or anything like it; it is thought by some to have become lead, while the particles thrown off have become helium, or possibly neon sometimes, or even argon. Let us suppose that. We cannot stop there, we are bound to go on to ask what was the origin of the radium itself. If it explode itself to pieces in the course of a few thousand years, why does any radium still exist? How is it being born? Does it spring into existence out of nothing, or has it some parent? And if it has a parent, what was the origin of that parent?

Never in physical science do we surmise for a moment that something suddenly springs into

being from previous non-existence. All that we perceive can be accounted for by changes of aggregation, by assemblage and dispersion. Of material aggregates we can trace the history, as we can trace the history of continents and islands, of suns and planets and stars; we can say, or try to say, whence they arose and what they will become; but never do we state that they will vanish into nothingness, nor do we ever conjecture that they arose from nothing.

It is true that in religion we seek to trace things farther back still, and ultimately say that everything arose from God; and there, perforce, our chain of existence, our links of antecedence and sequence must cease. But to allow such a statement to act as an intellectual refuge can only be a concession to human infirmity. Everything truly arose from God; but there is nothing specially illuminating in such a statement as that, for everything is in God now; and everything will continue to be animated and sustained by God to all eternity. It is not legitimate explicitly to introduce the idea of God to explain the past alone; the term applies equally to the present and to the future.

So the assertion just made, though true enough, is only a mode of saying that what was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. This is a religious mode of expressing our conviction of the uniformity of the Eternal Character, but it is not a statement which adds

to our scientific information. We may not be able to understand Nature, we are certainly unable to comprehend God. If we say that Nature is an aspect of the Divine Being, we must be speaking truly, but that only strengthens our present argument as to its durability and permanence; for we shall certainly not thus be led to attribute, to anything so qualified, any power of either jumping into or jumping out of existence. To make the statement that Nature is an aspect of the Godhead is explicitly to postulate eternity for every really existing thing, and to say that what we call death is not annihilation but only change. Birth is change. Death is change. A happy change, perhaps; a melancholy change, perhaps. That all depends upon circumstances and special cases, and on the point of view from which things are regarded; but, anyhow, an inevitable change.

I want to make the distinct assertion that a really existing thing never perishes, but only changes its form.

Physical science teaches us this, clearly enough, concerning matter and energy: the two great entities with which it has to do. And there is no likelihood of any great modification in this teaching. It may, perhaps, be induced in the long-run to modify the form of statement, and to assert conservation and real existence of ether and motion (or perhaps only of ether *in* motion) rather than of matter and energy. That is quite

possible, but the apparent variation of statement is only a variant in form; its essence and meaning are the same, except that it is now more general and would allow even the atoms of matter themselves to have their day and cease to be; being resolved, perhaps, into electricity, and that into some hitherto unimagined mode of motion of the ether. But all this is far from being accepted at present, and need not be considered here.

The distinction between what is transitory and what is permanent is quite clear. Evanescence is to be stated concerning every kind of "system" and aggregation and grouping. A crowd assembles, and then it disperses: it is a crowd no more. A cloud forms in the sky, and soon once more the sky is blue again; the cloud has died. Dew forms on a leaf: a little while, and it is gone again—gone apparently into nothingness, like the cloud. But we know better, both for cloud and dew. In an imperceptible form it was, and soon into an imperceptible form it will again have passed, but meanwhile there is the dewdrop glistening in the sun, reflecting all the movements of the neighbouring world, and contributing its little share to the beauty and the service of creation.

Its perceptible or incarnate existence is temporary. As a drop it was born, and as a drop it dies; but as aqueous vapour it persists, —an intrinsically imperishable substance, retaining all the properties which enabled it to

condense into drop or cloud. Even it, therefore, has the attribute of practical immortality.

So, then, what about life? Can that be a nonentity which has built up particles of carbon and hydrogen and oxygen into the form of an oak or an eagle or a man? Is it something which is really nothing; and soon shall it be manifestly the nothing that an ignorant and purblind creature may suppose it to be?

Not so; nor is it so with intellect and consciousness and will, nor with memory and love and adoration, nor all the manifold activities which at present strangely interact with matter and appeal to our bodily senses and terrestrial knowledge; they are not nothing, nor shall they ever vanish into nothingness or cease to be. They did not arise with us: they never did spring into being; they are as eternal as the Godhead itself, and in the eternal Being they shall endure for ever.

> "Though earth and man were gone,
> And suns and universes ceased to be,
> And Thou were left alone,
> Every existence would exist in Thee."

So sang Emily Brontë on her deathbed, in a poem which Mr. Haldane quotes in full, in his Gifford Lectures, as containing true philosophy.

And, surely in this respect there is a unity running through the universe, and a kinship

between the human and the Divine: witness the eloquent ejaculation of Carlyle:—

"What, then, is man! What, then, is man!

"He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more."

CHAPTER IX

THE PERMANENCE OF PERSONALITY

"After death the soul possesses self-consciousness, otherwise it would be the subject of spiritual death, which has already been disproved. With this self-consciousness necessarily remains personality and the consciousness of personal identity."—KANT, quoted by HEINZE

IN the preceding chapter on "The Transitory and the Permanent," permanence was claimed for the essence, the intrinsic reality, the *soul* of anything; and transitoriness for its bodily presentment—that is, for all such things as special groupings, arrangements, systems, which are liable to break up into their constituent elements, and cease to cohere into a united and organised aggregate. The only real destruction known to us, in fact, is this disintegration or breaking up of an assemblage: things themselves never spring into or out of existence. All we can cause or can observe is variety of *motion*—never creation or annihilation. And even the motion is *transferred* from one body to another, and transformed in the process; it is not generated from nothing, nor can it be destroyed. Special groupings and appearances are transitory; it is

their intrinsic and constructive essence which is permanent.

But then, what about personality, individuality, our own character and self? Are these akin to the temporary groupings which shall be dissolved, or are they among the substantial realities that shall endure?

Consider what is implied in the idea of personality, or personal and individual character:—A memory, a consciousness, and a will, in so far as they form a consistent harmonious whole, constitute a personality; which thus has relations with the past, the present, and the future. And we shall argue that personality or individuality itself dominates and transcends all temporal modes of expression, and so is essentially eternal wherever it exists.

The life of an insect or a tree may in some sort—must, one would think, in some sort—persist; but surely not its personal character! Why not? Because, presumably, it has none. We can hardly imagine that such a thing has any individuality or personality: it appears to us to be merely one of a group, a mere unit in a world of being, without personality of its own. That is what I assume, though I do not dogmatise; indeed I seriously doubt it for some of the higher animals. But, in any case, we may admit that, for all those things which only share in a general life, the temporarily appropriated portion of that general life will return, undiffer-

entiated and unidentified, to its central store: just as happens in the better-understood categories of matter and energy.

That is simple enough. But suppose that some individual character, some personality, *does* exist. Suppose that not only life, but intellect and emotion and consciousness and will, are all associated with a certain physical organism; and suppose that these things have a real and undeniable existence—an existence strengthened and compacted by experience and suffering and joy, till it is no longer only a function of the material aggregate in which for a time it is embodied, but belongs to a universe of spirit closely related to immanent and transcendent Deity; what then? If all that really exists, in the highest sense, is immortal, we have only to ask whether our personality, our character, our self, is sufficiently individual, sufficiently characteristic, sufficiently developed,—in a word, sufficiently *real*,—for if it is, there can then be no doubt of its continuance. It may return, indeed, in some sense, to the central store, but not without identity; its individual character will be preserved.

Conservation of Value

Professor Höffding of Copenhagen goes farther than this. In his book on the Philosophy of Religion he teaches that what he calls the axiom of "the conservation of value" is the funda-

mental ingredient in all religions—the foundation without which none of them could stand. In his view, as a philosopher, agreeing therein with Browning and other poets, no real Value or Good is ever lost. The whole progress and course of evolution is to increase and intensify the Valuable—that which "avails" or is serviceable for highest purposes,—and it does so by bringing out that which was potential or latent, so as to make it actual and real. Real it was, no doubt, all the time in some sense, as an oak is implicit in an acorn or a flower in a bud, but in process of time it unfolds and adds to the realised Value of the universe.

To carry out this idea we might define immortality thus:—

Immortality is the persistence of the essential and the real: it applies to things which the universe has gained—things which, once acquired, cannot be let go. It is an example of the conservation of Value. The tendency of evolution is to increase the actuality of Value, converting it from a potential into an available form.

Value, however, may be something more than merely constant in quantity, according to Professor Höffding. Experience of evolution suggests that it must increase. Certainly it passes from latent to more patent forms; and though it sometimes swings back, yet, on the whole, progress seems upward. Is it not legitimate to conjecture that

while Matter and Energy neither increase nor decrease, but only change in form; and while life too perhaps is constant in quantity, though alternating into and out of incarnation according as material organisms are put together or worn out; yet that some of the higher attributes of existence, —love, shall we say, joy perhaps, what may be generalised as Good generally, or as availability or Value,—may actually increase: their apparent alternations being really the curves of an upward-tending spiral? It is an optimistic faith, but it is the faith of the poets and seers. Whatever evil days may fall upon an individual or a nation, or even sometimes on a whole planet, yet the material is subordinate to the spiritual; and if the spiritual persists, it cannot be stationary: it must surely rise in the scale of existence. For evil is that which retards or frustrates development, in any part of the universe subject to its sway, and, accordingly, its kingdom cannot stand: evil contains an essentially suicidal element, so that on the whole the realm of the good must tend to increase, the realm of the bad to diminish.

"No existing universe can tend on the whole towards contraction and decay; because that would foster annihilation, and so any incipient attempt would not have survived; consequently an actually existing and flowing universe must on the whole cherish development, expansion, growth: and so tend towards infinity rather than

towards zero. The problem is therefore only a variant of the general problem of existence. Given existence, of a non-stagnant kind, and ultimate expansion or development *must* be its law. Good and evil can be defined in terms of development and decay respectively. This may be regarded as part of a revelation of the nature of God" (*The Substance of Faith*).

From this point of view the law of evolution is that Good shall on the whole increase in the universe with the process of the suns: that immortality itself is a special case of a more general Law, namely, that in the whole universe nothing really finally perishes that is worth keeping, that nothing once attained is ever thrown away.

The general mutability and mortality in the world need not perturb us. The things we see perishing and dying are not of the same kind as those which we hope will endure. Death and decay, as we know them, are interesting physical processes, which may be studied and understood; they have seized the imagination of man, and govern his emotions, perhaps unduly, but they ought not to suggest ultimate destruction, or the final triumph of ill; they are necessary correlatives to conception and birth into a material world; they do not really contradict an optimistic view of existence.

So far as we can tell, there need be no real waste, no real loss, no annihilation; but every-

thing sufficiently valuable, be it beauty, artistic achievement, knowledge, unselfish affection, may be thought of as enduring henceforth and for ever, if not with an individual and personal existence, yet as part of the eternal Being of God.

Permanent Element in Man

And this carries with it the persistence of personality in all creatures who have risen to the attainment of God-like faculties, such as self-determination and other attributes which suggest kinship with Deity and make their possessor a member of the Divine family. For whether or not this novel theory of the conservation of value stand the test of criticism, it is undeniable that, as in the quotation from Carlyle at the end of the last chapter, seers do not hesitate to attribute permanence and timeless existence to the essential element in man himself. They realise that he is one with the universe, that he may come to be in tune with the infinite, and that his spasmodic efforts towards a state wherein the average will rise to a level now attained by only the few, are part of the evolutionary travailing of the whole creation. "All omens," says Myers, "point towards the steady continuance of just such labour as has already taught us all we know. Perhaps, indeed, in this complex of interpenetrating spirits our own effort is no individual, no transitory, thing. That which lies at the root of each of us lies at the root of the

Cosmos too. Our struggle is the struggle of the Universe itself; and the very Godhead finds fulfilment through our upward-striving souls" (Myers, *Human Personality*, ii. p. 277).

To return to the problem of individual existence and to a more prosaic atmosphere. What we are claiming is no less than this—that, whereas it is certain that the present body cannot long exist without the soul, it is quite possible and indeed necessary for the soul to exist without the present body. We base this claim on the soul's manifest transcendence, on its genuine reality, and on the general law of the persistence of all real existence.

Recognition of the permanent element in man and of the probability of his individual survival, —that is to say, of the persistence of consciousness and memory after the destruction of the brain— if such recognition is to be of the greatest use to mankind, should be based on general considerations open and familiar to all, and be independent of special study with results verified by only a few. But if general arguments are insufficient, and if the reader has patience with a more detailed line of investigation, then I submit that the question can also be studied by the aid of observation and experiment, and that a conviction of persistence of personality can be strengthened by the discovery and critical discussion of specific facts.

Expression of Thought in Terms of Motion

The brain is definitely the link between the psychical and the physical, which in themselves belong to different orders of being. In the psychical region, "thought" is the dominant reality; in the physical, "motion." The bodily organism mysteriously enables one to be translated in terms of the other. Without some connecting mechanism—such as that afforded by brain, nerve, and muscle—the things we call intelligence and will, however real, would be incapable of moving the smallest particle of matter. Now, since it is solely by moving matter that we can operate at all in the material world, or can make ourselves known to our fellows,—for in the last resort speech and writing and every action reduce themselves to muscular movement,—and since death inhibits this power, by breaking the link between soul and body, death naturally stops all manifestation, interrupts all intercourse, and so has been superficially thought to involve the annihilation of the soul.

But such a conclusion is quite unwarranted. Existence need not make itself conspicuous: things are always difficult to discover when they make no impression on the senses. The human race is hardly yet aware, for instance, of the Ether of space; and there may be a multitude of other things in regard to which it is in the same predicament.

Superficially, nothing is easier than to claim that just as when the brain is damaged the memory fails, so when the brain is destroyed the memory ceases. The reasoning is so plausible and obvious, so within reach of the meanest capacity, that those who use it against adversaries of any but the lowest intelligence might surely assume that it had already occurred to them and exhibited its weak point. The weak point in the argument is its tacit assumption that whatever is non-manifest is non-existent; that smoothing out the traces of guilt is equivalent to annihilating a crime; and that by destroying the mechanism of interaction between the spiritual and the material aspects of existence you must necessarily be destroying one or other of those aspects themselves.

The brain is our present organ of thought. Granted; but it does not follow that brain generates or secretes thought, that inspiration is a physiological process, or that every thinking creature in the universe must possess a brain. Really we know too little about the way the brain *thinks*, if it can properly be said to think at all, to be justified in making any such assertion as that. Terrestrial animals are all, in a sense, one family, and their hereditary links with the psychical universe consist of the physiological mechanism called brain and nerve. But these most interesting material structures are our servants, not our masters: we have to train them to serve our

purposes; and if one side of the brain is injured, the other side may be trained to act instead. Destroy certain parts of the brain completely, however, and connexion between the psychic and the material regions is for us severed. True; but cutting off or damaging communication is not the same as destroying or damaging the communicator: nor is smashing an organ equivalent to killing the organist. When the Atlantic cable broke, in 1858, instant communication between England and America was destroyed; but that fact did not involve the destruction of either America or England. It appears to be necessary to emphasise this elementary matter, because the contrary contention is supposed to cut straight at the root of every kind of general argument for survival hitherto adduced.

But after all (it may be said) the above contention proves nothing either way; granted that breach of communication does not mean destruction of terminal stations, it leaves the question as to their persistence an open one. Yes, it does; it leaves persistence to be sustained by general arguments, such as those of the preceding chapter,—which were directed to establishing the priority in essence of the spiritual to the material, the dominance of idea over bodily presentation; it leaves permanence of personality to be supported by any kind of additional and special experience.

Argument from Telepathy

First of all, then, we must ask, are we quite sure that the breach of intercourse is as clear and definite and complete as had been supposed? We have no glimmering conception of the process by which mental activity operates on the matter of the brain; so we cannot be sure that its influence is limited entirely to the brain material belonging to its own special organism. It may conceivably be able to affect other brains too, either directly, or indirectly through an immediate influence on the mind associated with them. Intelligent communication is normally carried on by means of conventional mechanical movements, calculated to set up special aerial or ethereal tremors, which have to be apprehended through sense organs and brain, and interpreted back again into thought. But we are constrained to contemplate the possibility of a more direct method, and to ask, is there ever any direct psychical connection between mind and mind, irrespective of intermediate physical processes? It is a definite though difficult question, to be answered by experience. And an affirmative answer would suggest, among other things, that though individuality is dependent upon brain for physical manifestation, it may not be dependent on brain for psychical existence.

Direct mental connexion is difficult to prove, in a way convincing to those who approach the

subject from the material side and with admitted prejudice; because in the proof, or to produce any recordable impression, a bodily organ—such as brain or muscle—*must* be used. We are not, and cannot be, completely independent of the body, in this earth life: but we can bring forward facts which seem to indicate an activity specially and peculiarly psychical, and only slightly physical. Of physical modes of communication between mind and mind there are many varieties: none of which do we really understand, beyond a knowledge of their material details, though we are well accustomed to them all; but we know of one which appears not to be physical, save at its terminals, and which has the *appearance* of being, in its mode of transmission, exclusively psychical. That is to say, it occurs as if one mind operated directly either on another brain or on another mind across a distance (if *distance* has any meaning in such a case); or as if one mind exerted its influence on another through the conscious intervention of a third mind acting as messenger; or as if mental intercourse were effected unconsciously, through a general *nexus* of communication—a universal world-mind. All these hypotheses have been suggested at different times by the phenomenon of telepathy; and which of them is nearest the truth it is difficult to say. There are some who think that all are true, and that different means are employed at different times.

What we can assert is this, that the facts of "telepathy," and in a less degree of what is called "clairvoyance," must be regarded as practically established, in the judgment of those who have studied them. There may be, indeed there is, still much doubt about the explanation to be attached to those facts; there is uncertainty as to their real meaning, and as to whether the idea half-suggested by the word "telepathy" is completely correct; but the facts themselves are too numerous and well authenticated to be denied, —even if we except from our survey the directly experimental cases designed to test and bring to book this strange human faculty.

Telepathy has opened a new chapter in science, and is of an importance that cannot be exaggerated. Even alone, it tends mightily to strengthen the argument for transcendence of mind over body; so that we may reasonably expect the one to be capable of existing independently, and of surviving the other, though by itself, or in a discarnate condition, it is presumably unable to achieve anything directly on the physical plane. But telepathy is not all. Telepathy is indeed only the first link in a chain: there are further links, further stages on the road to scientific proof.

Arguments from Præternormal Psychology

Have we no facts to go upon, only speculation, concerning the actual persistence of individual

memory and consciousness, — of much that characterises a personality—apart from terrestrial matter? Facts we have; but they are not generally known, nor are they universally accepted: they have still, many of them, to run the gauntlet of scientific criticism even among the few students who take the trouble to study them. Their theory has been worked at pertinaciously, but it is still in a rudimentary stage, and by the mass of scientific men the whole subject is at present ignored, because it seems an elusive and disappointing inquiry, and because there are other fields which are easier of cultivation and promise more immediate fertility.

The chief of the facts to which we can appeal belong to one of three marked regions:

First, experiences connected with genius, vision, and dream, extending up to premonition and clairvoyance,—the specially *psychological* region.

Second, the singular modification of bodily faculty sometimes experienced, — ranging from unusual extension of sensory and muscular powers, such as hyperæsthesia and what is technically known as "automatism," up to various grades of what has been described as "materialisation";—all which great group of asserted and controverted phenomena may be said to belong to the *physiological* region.

Third, the at first sight disconcerting facts

connected with apparent changes, dislocations and disintegrations, of personality—what we may call the *pathological* region.

Concerning all this mass of information, not only is the theory far from distinct, but many of the facts themselves are only sparsely known: they belong to a special branch of study, conducted under many difficulties, and cannot be apprehended properly at second hand.

Suffice it therefore to say, that whereas it is quite clear that *manifestation* of memory and consciousness, in a form capable of being appreciated by or demonstrated to us, is evidently not possible without an organism or *body* of some kind, yet—in the judgment of many students of the subject—a surviving memory or personality, even though discarnate, need not be utterly and completely prevented from still occasionally operating in our sphere.

For as it was possible for what, in Chapter VIII., we defined as "soul" to compose and employ an organ suited to itself, out of various kinds of nutriment,—so also it appears to be possible, though not without difficulty and extraordinary trouble, for a discarnate entity or psychical unit occasionally to utilise a body constructed by some other similar "soul," and to make an attempt at communication and manifestation through that. It has even been conjectured that by special exertion of psychical power a temporary organ of materialisation can be constructed, presumably

of organic particles, sufficient to enable some interaction between spirit and matter—and even to display some personal characteristics—through the utilisation of a form partially separate from, though also closely connected with, and as some think even borrowed from, the bodily organism of the auxiliary person known technically as the "medium" of communication, whose presence is certainly necessary. In favour of such an occurrence there is much evidence, some of it of a weak kind, some of it quite valueless; but again some of it is strong, evidenced by weighing, and vouched for by experienced naturalists and observers such as Dr. A. R. Wallace and Sir W. Crookes, as well as by the eminent physiologist Professor Richet, and by Professors Schiaparelli, Lombroso, and other foreign men of science.

The idea here suggested is admittedly bizarre, and at first sight absurd; nevertheless something of the kind has the appearance of being true, in spite of its having been discredited by much professional fraud exercised upon too willing dupes. The phenomenon on which it is based is at any rate a puzzling one, calling for further investigation: which must ultimately pursue it into a region quite apart from and beyond the obvious possibilities of fraud; that is to say, must not only establish it as a fact, if it be a fact, but must ascertain the laws which govern it.

Argument from Automatism

More frequently, however, a simpler method, akin to telepathy and to what is commonly known as inspiration or "possession," is observed; whereby some portion of the brain of "the automatist" appears to be operated upon directly, so as to produce intelligible statements, in speech or writing, often of considerable length and occasionally in unknown languages; — these messages being, at least in the cases where they are not merely subjective and of little interest, apparently irrespective of the ordinary consciousness, and only slightly sophisticated by the normal mental activity, of the person by whom this organ is usually wielded, and to whom it nominally "belongs."

The body, in fact, or some part of the body, though usually controlled and directed by the particular psychical agent which has composed and grown accustomed to it, can sometimes be found capable of responding to a foreign intelligence,—acting either telepathically through the mind, or telergically by a more direct process straight on the brain. Sometimes the controlling intelligence belongs to a living person, as in cases of hypnotism; more usually it is an influence emanating from what we must consider some portion of the automatist's own larger or subliminal self. Occasionally a person appears able to respond to thoughts or stimuli embedded, as

it were, among psycho-physical surroundings in a manner at present ill understood and almost incredible;—as if strong emotions could be unconsciously recorded in matter, so that the deposit shall thereafter affect a sufficiently sensitive organism, and cause similar emotions to reproduce themselves in its subconsciousness, in a manner analogous to the customary conscious interpretation of photographic or phonographic records, and indeed of pictures or music and artistic embodiment generally. And lastly, there are people who seem able to respond to a psychical agency apparently related to the surviving portion of intelligences now discarnate, in such a way as to suggest that the said intelligences are picking up the thread of their old thoughts, and entering into something like their old surroundings and their old feelings—though often only in a more or less dreamy and semi-entranced condition—for the purpose of conveying hallucinatory or other impressions to those who are still in the completely embodied state.

It would be a great mistake to assume, without proof, that any given automatic message really emanates from the person to whom it is attributed; and such a generalisation applied to all so-called messages would be grotesquely untrue. But then, neither should we be safe in maintaining that none of them have an authentic character, and that they are never in any degree what they purport to be. The elimination of the normal

personality of the automatist, and the proof of the supposed communicator's identity, are singularly difficult; but in a few cases the evidence for identity is remarkably strong. The substance of the message, and the kind of memory displayed in these cases, belong not at all to the brain of the automatist, but clearly to the intelligence of the asserted control: of whose identity and special knowledge they are sometimes strongly characteristic. As to the elimination of normal personality, however, it must be admitted that, in all cases, the manner and *accidents* or accessories of the message are liable to be modified by the material instrument or organ through which the thought or idea is for our information reproduced. The reproduction of a thought in our world appears to demand distinct effort on the part of a transcendental thinker; and it seems to be almost a matter of indifference, or so to speak of accident not determined by the thinker, whether it make its appearance here in the form of speech or of writing, or whether it take the form of a work of art, or of unusual spiritual illumination. This is surely true of orthodox inspiration, as well as of what we are now conjecturing may perhaps be an attempt at some additional method of arousing ideas in us. Moreover, in both cases, lucidity is only to be expected, and is only obtained, in flashes. The best of us only get flashes of genius now and then, and the experience is seldom unduly prolonged. Why should we expect it to be otherwise?

There is another aspect of the matter that may be mentioned too. For most of the difficulty of inter-communication we ourselves must be held responsible. Our normal immersion in mundane affairs may be very sensible and practical, and is probably essential to earthly progress until our civilisation is rather more consolidated and developed, but it can hardly facilitate communion with another order of existence. Nor is it likely that we should be able to appreciate the intimate concerns of that other order, even if it were feasible to convey a detailed account of them.

It is true that messages are often vague and disappointing, even when apparently genuine; untrue that they are invariably futile and useless and inappropriate,—such an assertion could only be made by people imperfectly acquainted with the facts. In certain cases it is quite clear that a bodily organism has been controlled by something other than its usual and normal intelligence; and in a few cases the identity of the control has been almost crucially established: though that is a matter to be dealt with more technically elsewhere.

Subliminal Faculty

The extension of faculty exhibited during some trance states has suggested that a similar enlargement of memory and consciousness may follow or accompany our departure from this life, and is partly responsible for the notion of the existence

of a subliminal or normally unconscious portion of our total personality. On this subject I can conveniently refer to the summary contained in Myers's chapters on "Disintegrations of Personality" and on "Genius," in vol. i. of his *Human Personality*. This doctrine—the theory of a larger and permanent personality of which the conscious self is only a fraction, in process of individualisation, the fraction being greater or less according to the magnitude of the individual,—this doctrine, as a working hypothesis, illuminates many obscure facts, and serves as a thread through an otherwise bewildering labyrinth. It removes a number of elementary stumbling-blocks, which otherwise obstruct an attempt to realise vividly the incipient stages of personal existence; it accounts for the extraordinary rapidity with which the development of an individual proceeds; and it eases the theory of ordinary birth and death. It achieves all this as well as the office for which it was originally designed, namely, the elucidation of unusual experiences, such as those associated with dreams, premonitions, and prodigies of genius. Many great and universally recognised thinkers, Plato, Virgil, Kant, I think,[1] and Wordsworth, all had room for an idea more or less of this kind; which indeed, in

[1] In justification of the inclusion of this name, the following may suffice as an example: "For if we should see things and ourselves as they are, we would see ourselves in a world of spiritual natures with which our entire real relation neither began at birth nor ended with the body's death."—KANT, quoted by HEINZE.

some form, is almost necessitated by a consideration of our habitually unconscious performance of organic function. Whatever it is that controls our physiological mechanism, it is certainly not our own consciousness; nor is it any part of our recognised and obvious personality.

"We feel that we are greater than we know."

Our present state may be likened to that of the hulls of ships submerged in a dim ocean among many strange beasts, propelled in a blind manner through space; proud perhaps of accumulating many barnacles as decoration; only recognising our destination by bumping against the dock wall. With no cognisance of the deck and the cabins, the spars and the sails; no thought of the sextant and the compass and the captain; no perception of the lookout on the mast, of the distant horizon; no vision of objects far ahead, dangers to be avoided, destinations to be reached, other ships to be spoken with by other means than bodily contact;—a region of sunshine and cloud, of space, of perception, and of intelligence, utterly inaccessible to the parts below the water-line.

To suppose that we know and understand the universe, to suppose that we have grasped its main outlines, that we realise pretty completely not only what is in it, but the still more stupendous problem of what is not and cannot be in it—as do some of our gnostic (self-styled "agnostic") friends—is a presumptuous exercise of limited

intelligence, only possible to a certain very practical and useful order of brain, which has good solid work of a commonplace kind to do in the world, and has been restricted in its outlook, let us say by Providence, in order that it may do that one thing and do it well.

And just as we fail to grasp the universe, so do we fail as yet to know ourselves: the part of which we have become aware, the part which manifestly governs our planetary life, is probably far from being the whole.[1] The assumption that the true self is complex, and that a larger range of memory may ultimately be attained, is justified by the researches of alienists, and mental physicians generally, into those curious pathological cases of "strata of memory" or dislocations of personality, on which many medical books and papers are available for the student. In cases of multiple personality, the patients, when in the ordinary or normally conscious state, are usually ignorant of what has happened in the intervening periods when they were not in that state, and are not

[1] Such an admission is quite consistent with recognition of the momentous character of this present stage of existence, not only while it lasts, but as influencing, and contributing in every sense to, the future; the doctrine of the subliminal self throws no sort of contempt or discouragement on the things which really ought to interest us here and now. There is "danger of losing sight of the ideal in our immediate life, and thinking that it is to be found only in the past or in the future," says Professor Caird; whereas, in truth, our little struggle is part of the great conflict of good and evil in the universe, and we should be encouraged were we to "realise that our life is not an aimless or meaningless vicissitude of events, but an essential step in the great process."

aware of what they have done when in one of the deeper states; but as soon as the personality has entered an ultra-normal condition, it is often found to be aware, not only of its previous actions when in that condition, but also of what was felt and known while at the ordinary grade of intelligence.

The analogy pointed to is that whereas we living men and women, while associated with this mortal organism, are ignorant of whatever experience our larger selves may have gone through in the past—yet when we wake out of this present materialised condition, and enter the region of larger consciousness, we may gradually realise in what a curious though legitimate condition of ignorance we now are; and may become aware of our fuller possession, with all that has happened here and now fully remembered, and incorporated as an additional experience into the wide range of knowledge which that larger entity must have accumulated since its intelligence and memory began. The transition called death may thus be an awaking rather than a sleeping; it may be that we, still involved in mortal coil, are in the more dream-like and unreal condition:

> "Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
> He hath awakened from the dream of life—
> 'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
> With phantoms an unprofitable strife."
>
> (SHELLEY'S "Adonais.")

The ideas thus briefly indicated have been

suggested by a mass of unfamiliar experience, upon which it is legitimate to speculate, though quite illegitimate to dogmatise; but in case they seem too fanciful to serve as any part of a basis for human immortality, it may be well to show how clearly the possibility of a larger and fuller existence than the present is indicated by facts with which we are all familiar.

Argument from Genius

It must be apparent how few of our faculties can really be accounted for by the need of sustenance and by the struggle for existence; and how those necessary faculties and powers naturally assume an overweening importance here and now, from the fact that they are so specially fitted to our present surroundings. So that the less immediately practical mental and spiritual characteristics can be spoken of by anthropologists as if they were of the nature of sports and by-products, not in the direct line of evolutional advance.

But, says Myers:

"The faculties which befit the material environment have absolutely no primacy, unless it be of the merely chronological kind, over those faculties which science has often called *by-products*, because they have no manifest tendency to aid their possessor in the struggle for existence in a material world. The higher gifts of genius—poetry, the plastic arts, music, philosophy, pure mathematics

—all of these are precisely as much in the central stream of evolution—are perceptions of new truth and powers of new action just as decisively predestined for the race of man—as the aboriginal Australian's faculty for throwing a boomerang or for swarming up a tree for grubs. There is, then, about those loftier interests nothing exotic, nothing accidental; they are an intrinsic part of that ever-evolving response to our surroundings which forms not only the planetary but the cosmic history of all our race."

We can regard these higher faculties, these inspirations of genius and the like, not only as contributing to our best moments now, but as forecasts or indications of something still more specially appropriate to our surroundings in the future—anticipations of worlds not realised—rudiments of what will develop more fully hereafter; so that their apparent incongruousness and occasional inconvenience, under present mundane conditions, are quite natural. Ultimately they may be found to be nearer to the heart of things than the attributes which are successful in the stage to which this world has at present attained; though they can only exhibit their full meaning and attain their full development in a higher condition of existence,—whether that be found by the race on this planet or by the individual in a life to come.

"An often-quoted analogy has here a closer application than is commonly apprehended. The

grub comes from the egg laid by a winged insect, and a winged insect it must itself become; but meantime it must for the sake of its own nurture and preservation acquire certain larval characters —characters sometimes so complex that the observer may be excused for mistaking that larva for a perfect insect destined for no further change save death. Such larval characters, acquired to meet the risks of a temporary environment, I seem to see in man's earthly strength and glory. In these I see the human analogues of the poisonous tufts which choke the captor — the attitudes of mimicry which suggest an absent sting — the 'death's head' coloration which disconcerts a stronger foe."

For the triumphs of natural selection, then, we must look not to the spiritual faculties and endowments of the race, but to the business-like masterfulness which makes one man a conqueror and another a millionaire. These we can regard as larval characters, of special service in the present stage of existence, but destined to be discarded, or modified almost out of recognition, in proportion as a higher state is attained. This I take to be the deep meaning of the Gospel sentence beginning "How hardly!"

But to continue Myers's biological parable:

"Meantime the adaptation to aerial life is going on; something of the imago or perfect insect is preformed within the grub; and in some species, even before they sink into their transitional

slumber, the rudiments of wings still helpless protrude awkwardly beneath the larval skin. Those who call Shelley, for instance, 'a beautiful but ineffectual angel beating his wings in the void,' may adopt, if they choose, this homelier but exacter parallel. Shelley's special gifts were no more by-products of Shelley's digestive system than the wings are by-products of the grub" (Myers, i. p. 97).

The meaning, you see, is that they *are* in the direct line of evolution, when the whole of existence is taken into account; and that similarly in the evolution of genius we are watching the emergence of unguessed potentialities from the primal germ,—the first revealings

> "Of faculties, displayed in vain, but born
> To prosper in some better sphere."
> (BROWNING'S "Paracelsus.")

Moreover, what is true for the individual must be true also in some measure for the race. Embryology teaches us that each organism rapidly recapitulates or epitomises, amid how different conditions, its ancestral past history. It is legitimate to extend the same idea to the future, and to regard the progress of the individual and the progress of the race as in some degree concurrent; since their potentialities are similar, though their surroundings will be different. This argument, so far as I know, is novel, and is deserving of some attention.

Argument from Mental Pathology

And as to the disintegrations of personality,—the painful defects of will, the lapses of memory, the losses of sensation—such as are manifested by the hysteric patients of the Salpêtrière and other hospitals,—the lesson to be learnt from those pathological cases is not one of despair at the weaknesses and ghastly imperfections possible to humanity; rather, on this view, it is one of hope and inspiration. For they point to the possibility that our present condition may be as much below an attainable standard as the condition of those poor patients is below what by a natural convention we have agreed to regard as the "normal" state. We might indeed feel bound to regard it not only as normal but as ultimate, were it not that some specimens of our race have already transcended it,—have shown that genius, almost superhuman, is possible to man,—and have thereby foreshadowed the existence of a larger personality for us all. Nay, they have done more,—for in thus realising in the flesh some of the less accessible of human attributes, they have become the first-fruits of a brotherhood higher than the human; we may hail them as the forerunners of a nobler race. Such a race, I venture to predict, will yet come into existence, not only in the vista of what may seem to some an unattractive and unsubstantial future, but here in the sunshine on this planet Earth.

> "Prognostics told
> Man's near approach; so in man's self arise
> August anticipations, symbols, types
> Of a dim splendour ever on before."

For as the hysteric stands in comparison with us ordinary men, so perhaps do we ordinary men stand in comparison with a not impossible ideal of faculty and of self-control. "Might not," says Myers, "all the historic tale be told, *mutato nomine*, of the whole race of mortal men? What assurance have we that from some point of higher vision we men are not as these shrunken and shadowed souls? Suppose that we had all been a community of hysterics, all of us together subject to these shifting losses of sensation, these inexplicable gaps of memory, these sudden defects and paralyses of movement and of will. Assuredly we should soon have argued that our actual powers were all with which the human organism was or could be endowed. . . . Nay, if we had been a populace of hysterics we should have acquiesced in our hysteria. We should have pushed aside as a fantastic enthusiast the fellow-sufferer who strove to tell us that this was not all that we were meant to be. As we now stand, —each one of us *totus, teres, atque rotundus* in his own esteem,—we see at least how cowardly would have been that contentment, how vast the ignored possibilities, the forgotten hope. Yet who assures us that even here and now we have developed into the full height and scope of our being? A moment comes when the most be-

clouded of these hysterics has a glimpse of the truth. A moment comes when, after a profound slumber, she wakes into an *instant clair*—a flash of full perception, which shows her as solid, vivid realities all that she has in her bewilderment been apprehending phantasmally as a dream. . . . Is there for us also any possibility of a like resurrection into reality and day? Is there for us any sleep so deep that waking from it after the likeness of perfect man we shall be satisfied; and shall see face to face; and shall know even as also we are known?"

Whatever may be the answer to this question, it is undoubtedly true now—and that it is true is largely owing to him and his co-workers—that "these disturbances of personality are no longer for us—as they were even for the last generation—mere empty marvels, which the old-fashioned sceptic would often plume himself on refusing to believe. On the contrary, they are beginning to be recognised as psycho-pathological problems of the utmost interest;—no one of them exactly like another, and no one of them without some possible *aperçu* into the intimate structure of man."

Religious Objections

Whatever objections to the above argument may be adduced from the side of science—and there are sure to be many, for free criticism is its natural atmosphere,—there is one from the side of religion—more often felt than expressed perhaps—which I must in conclusion briefly notice:

Objection is sometimes taken against any attempt being made gradually to arrive at what in process of time may come to be regarded as a scientific proof of such a thing as immortality; on the ground that it is an encroachment on the region of faith, a presumptuous interference with what ought to be treated as the territory of religion alone.

To meet these objectors on their own ground, they might be reminded of such texts as 2 Pet. i. 5, Prov. xxv. 2, as well as of the still more authoritative encouragement to investigation contained in Luke xi. 9 and in 1 John i. 5; the latter, or indeed both, being an expression of the basal postulate of the man of science, namely, the ultimate intelligibility of the Universe.

But, after all, an objection of this kind can only be felt: first by those who think that knowledge is the enemy of belief, instead of its strengthener and supporter; and second by those who unconsciously fear that the domain of religion is finite, and who therefore resent encroachments as diminishing its already too restricted area. It cannot be felt by people who realise that the dominion of religion is unlimited, and that there is infinite scope for faith, however far knowledge—real and accurate scientific knowledge—extends its boundaries. The enlargement of those boundaries is all gain; for thus the one area is increased while the other is not diminished. Infinity cannot be diminished by subtraction. No such objection to

the spread of knowledge was felt by that inspired writer who hoped for the time when "the earth shall be full of the *knowledge* of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Whatever science *can* establish, that it has a right to establish: more than a right, it has a duty. Whatever science can examine into, that it has a right to examine into. If there be things which we are not intended to know, be assured that we shall never know them: we shall not know enough about them even to ask a question or start an inquiry. The intention of the universe is not going to be frustrated by the insignificant efforts of its own creatures. If we refrain from examination and inquiry, for no better reason than the fanciful notion that perhaps we may be trespassing on forbidden ground, such hesitation argues a pitiful lack of faith in the goodwill and friendliness and power of the forces that make for righteousness.

Let us study all the facts that are open to us, with a trusting and an open mind; with care and candour testing all our provisional hypotheses, and with slow and cautious verification making good our steps as we proceed. Thus may we hope to reach out farther and ever farther into the unknown; sure that as we grope in the darkness we shall encounter no clammy horror, but shall receive an assistance and sympathy which it is legitimate to symbolise as a clasp from the hand of Christ himself.

SECTION IV—SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY

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CHAPTER X

SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS THE RE-INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

I. Legend

NOW that religion is becoming so very real, being born again in the spirit of modern criticism and scientific knowledge, may it not be well to ask whether the formal statement of some of the doctrines which we have inherited from mediæval and still earlier times cannot be wisely and inoffensively modified? There is usually some sort of forced sense in which almost any statement can be judged to have in it an element of truth, especially a statement which embodies the beliefs of many generations. But when the element of truth is other than had been supposed, and when the original statement has to be tortured in order to display it, it may be time to consider whether its mode of expression can be reconsidered and redrafted,—without harm, nay to the ultimate benefit of that

religion of truth and clearness which we all seek to attain.

No doubt the crudity of popular statements of doctrine is recognised by many modern theologians and experts, who have travelled far beyond the original intention and superficial interpretation of their creeds and formularies; and these may be ready and anxious for revision, although their responsible utterances on fundamental subjects are duly restrained and cautious, lest they offend the ignorant whose minds are not yet ripe. In that case it may be permissible for laymen to show that they at least are ready for a doctrinal revision—a kind of stocktaking such as is necessary from time to time in all living and expanding subjects, and is especially necessary now after a century of notable advance in natural knowledge.

It may be objected that revision of religious formulæ is no concern of mine; and there is force in the retort. I find that I have said below that harm is liable to dog the footsteps of a well-meaning fanatic or a blatant fool. Possibly it is in something akin to the spirit of the fanatic that I take the risk of entering upon what may prove a thorny path, though I earnestly trust that very little pain to others need accrue from any errors of mine.

Consider, then, the doctrine of the Atonement, and let us ask whether the expression of that doctrine traditionally and officially held or sup-

posed to be held by the churches to-day is satisfactory.

In days when the vicariousness of sin could be accepted, and when an original fall of Adam could be held as imputed to the race, it was natural to admit the possibility of a vicarious punishment and to accept an imputed righteousness. In the days when God could be thought of as an angry Jehovah who sent pestilences until He was propitiated by the smell of a burnt-offering, it was possible to imagine that the just anger of an offended God could be met by the sacrifice of an innocent victim.

The fall of man and the redemption by blood therefore in a measure go together, and may be said to constitute the backbone of Evangelical Christianity; which in some of its crude and revivalistic forms used to lay great stress upon blood and its potent redeeming efficacy.

But all this is much older than Christianity; and it is clarifying to realise how these strange doctrines, occasionally preached even at this day, represent a survival of religious beliefs held five or six centuries before the Christian era.

In those admirable translations of Euripides, with which Professor Gilbert Murray has delighted the heart not only of scholars but of at least one student of science, we find in his notes on *The Bacchæ* the following passages:

"A curious relic of primitive superstition and cruelty remained firmly embedded in Orphism—

a doctrine irrational and unintelligible, and for that very reason wrapped in the deepest and most sacred mystery: a belief in the sacrifice of Dionysus himself, and the purification of man by his blood.

"It seems possible that the savage Thracians, in the fury of their worship on the mountains, when they were possessed by the god and became 'wild beasts,' actually tore with their teeth and hands any hares, goats, fawns, or the like that they came across. There survives a constant tradition of inspired Bacchanals in their miraculous strength tearing even bulls asunder—a feat, happily, beyond the bounds of human possibility. The 'wild beast' that tore was, of course, the savage god himself. And by one of these curious confusions of thought, which seem so inconceivable to us and so absolutely natural and obvious to primitive men, the beast torn was also the god! The Orphic congregations of later times, in their most holy gatherings, solemnly partook of the blood of a bull, which was, by a mystery, the blood of Dionysus Zagreus himself, the 'Bull of God,' slain in sacrifice for the purification of man.

. . . . . .

"It is noteworthy, and throws much light on the spirit of Orphism, that, apart from this sacramental tasting of the blood, the Orphic worshipper held it an abomination to eat the flesh of animals at all. . . . It fascinated him just because it was

so incredibly primitive and uncanny; because it was a mystery which transcended reason!"[1]

Professor Murray seems to think it hard for a modern to contemplate the victim and the priest as in any sense one person, but orthodox religious people will experience no difficulty, as is evidenced by the hymn based on Heb. vii. 27:

"Himself the Victim and Himself the Priest,"

which, it must be admitted, forms a curious parallel; though the meaning is simple and legitimate enough, namely, that the sacrifice is voluntary: else, indeed, were it mere execution. But a few strange hymns are more worthy of the worship of Dionysus, at least in some of its older primitive and purer forms, than of a place in a church-service (Ancient and Modern) collection of to-day. These hymns emphasise, for the edification of the laity, the more barbarous concomitants of sacrificial and vicarious redemption, by blood drawn from and pain inflicted on an innocent victim who is likewise a god.

Sometimes the blood is represented as being used for cleansing purposes:

"Oh, wash me in Thy precious blood."

Sometimes it is described as a vivifying draught:

"May those precious fountains
Drink to thirsty souls afford";

[1] Mr. L. P. Jacks has called my attention to an interesting article on a similar subject, by Dr. Farnell, in the *Hibbert Journal* for January 1904, p. 320.

but pagan precedents are closely followed, and pagan survival is clear.

The idea of sacrificial suffering judicially self-inflicted by a wildly vengeful Deity is an essential element in popular theology:

"He, Who once in righteous vengeance
Whelmed the world beneath the flood,
Once again in mercy cleansed it
With His own most precious Blood,
Coming from His throne on high
On the painful Cross to die.

"We were sinners doomed to die;
Jesus paid the penalty."

It is more like a legal fiction or commercial transaction than a natural process.

"Scourged with unrelenting fury
For the sins which we deplore,
By His livid stripes He heals us,
Raising us to fall no more."

"Had Jesus never bled and died,
Then what could thee and all betide
But uttermost damnation?'

This sort of crude materialism naturally leads to a kind of idolatry:

"Faithful Cross, above all other,
One and only noble Tree,
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be;
Sweetest wood, and sweetest iron;
Sweetest weight is hung on thee.

"Thou alone wast counted worthy
This world's ransom to sustain,
That a shipwrecked race for ever
Might a port of refuge gain,
With the sacred Blood anointed
Of the Lamb for sinners slain."

Admit, however, that the belief in the efficacy of sacrifice is old, and that our form of it has a long ancestry which may be traced: that need not undermine its essential truth. It may only mean that humanity had glimpses of truth earlier than the full revelation; and the familiar doctrine of "types" will be appealed to.

In certain beliefs, such as that of immortality, I should myself allow the argument to have weight, and should not be unwilling to appeal to the antiquity of human tradition as tending in favour of some sort of truth underlying this perennial and protean faith; and so in the matter of vicarious punishment and bloody atonement by an innocent victim or by an incarnate god for the sins of humanity, if we could feel a real and helpful truth underlying it, we might admit that the antiquity of the tradition was even in its favour. But it cannot be that *all* religious creeds, without exception, which are inherited from barbarous times have a true ethical significance: some of them must surely be mistaken, and it becomes a question which of them we may retain and which we must gradually seek to emancipate ourselves from. I would not be in the least dogmatic in such a matter, but surely it is generally recognised that although the sufferings and violent death of Jesus were natural consequences of teachings so far in advance of the age, and although the pity and terror of such a ghastly tragedy has a purifying and sacra-

mental influence, yet we are now unable to detect in it anything of the nature of *punishment*; nor do we imagine for a moment that an angry God was appeased by it, and is consequently disposed to treat more lightly the sins of men here and now, or any otherwise than as they have always been treated by a constant, steadfast, persevering Universe.

Nor can we suppose that leaders of theologic thought are able to derive satisfaction from the more modern doctrine (perhaps, for all I know, a heresy) that it was not so much an infinite punishment as an infinite repentance that was efficacious; so that, adequate repentance having been achieved once for all long ago, sinners have nothing further to do but to believe and acquiesce in it.

As a matter of fact, the higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment. His mission, if he is good for anything, is to be up and doing,[1] and in so far as he acts wrongly or unwisely he expects to suffer. He may unconsciously plead for mitigation on the ground of good intentions,[2] but never either consciously or unconsciously will anyone but a cur ask for the punishment to fall on someone else, nor rejoice if told that it already has so fallen.

As for "original sin" or "birth sin" or other notion of that kind,—by which is partly meant the sin of his parents,—that sits absolutely lightly on

[1] Matt. xxiv. 46, xii. 43. [2] Matt. xxv. 25.

him. As a matter of fact it is non-existent, and no one but a monk could have invented it. Whatever it be, it is not a business for which we are responsible. We did not make the world; and an attempt to punish us for our animal origin and ancestry would be simply comic, if anyone could be found who was willing to take it seriously.

Here we are; we have risen, as to our bodies, from the beasts; as a race the struggle has been severe, and there have been both rises and falls. We have been helped now and again by bright and shining individual examples—true incarnations of diviner spirits than our own,—notably by one supremely bright Spirit who blazed out nineteen hundred years ago, and was speedily murdered by the representatives of that class whose mission appears to be to stone the prophets, and to do their worst to exterminate new ideas and kinds of goodness to which they are not accustomed. Fortunately for the race, they are only able to kill the body; the soul, the inspiration, the germ of a new and higher faith, seem for ever beyond their grasp.

But now that orthodox people enthusiastically recognise his supreme goodness, they take steps to deny that he was effectively man,—only half man say some, only quarter man say others:[1] human only on one side they feel he must have

[1] This has reference to the dogma concerning the supposed origin of the Virgin Mary, as formulated at Rome.

been, else he could not have been so good, so wise, so patient. So the hope of a higher humanity is to be taken from us, in order that man's sins may be superhumanly atoned for, and an angry God illogically appeased.

Well, well! demi-gods were common enough in those days. And again it may be said that the antiquity of the belief is to its credit, and that these tales of the gods[1] were but crude heraldings of a divine truth some day to be made clear.

But why, why, what is the good of it? Can a divine spirit not enter into a man born of two parents? Is divine inspiration to be limited to a being of exceptional parentage? If we grant that it is a physiological condition towards or at which the race should aim,—if we suppose that some day we shall have one parent only, and that that is to be our apotheosis,—there would be meaning in it. In that case Christ would indeed be the first-fruits, and would represent some unknown possibility in our physical nature. But do people think that? And if not, what is the virtue of semi-parentage? If for a Divine Incarnation we admit human parentage at all, we may as well admit it altogether. If a taint is conveyed by inheritance from, or dependence on, human flesh—grossly built up by daily food of terrestrial materials, and grossly cleared of refuse

[1] Familiar to the Jews during their Babylonian captivity and the Roman conquest.

—that taint appertains not to fatherhood only, but to motherhood also; and the only way to avoid the imaginary stain is to postulate a being sprung like Pallas from the brain of Zeus—a pure embodiment of thought, a true psychological "conception." That Christ possessed a Divine Spirit in excess, to an extent unknown to us—that he was an embodiment of truly Divine attributes,[1] which as thus revealed we worship—may be willingly admitted; that he represents a standard or peak towards which humanity may try to aim, is a tenable and helpful creed; but that his body was abnormally produced, even if it be the fact, seems to give no assistance. I derive no sort of comfort or intellectual aid from an idea of that kind.

For what is virgin birth? merely a case of parthenogenesis. It has been asserted, perhaps erroneously, that X-rays have the power to produce parthenogenetic development in some lowly kinds of ova.[2] It is doubtless thinkable enough. I would not say it is impossible, but that it is ethically useless. The lowest organisms multiply by fission, sexual reproduction comes in later as an improved form; but it comes in very low down—as low down as the higher plants—and exists throughout the main animal kingdom. Possibly at some other stage, or by some other process, it may be dispensed with. If so, it will

[1] John xvi. 28, xvii. 4, i. 18.

[2] *British Medical Journal*, 13th February 1904, p. 383.

be a biological fact of scientific interest; and, if ever applicable to man, a development of astounding social significance; but nothing more. There is no virtue in multiplication by fission, any more than there is vice in multiplication by sex. Both are superlatively interesting facts, like many other facts of science; and no one can say that we understand the extraordinary truth that gentle warmth applied for a certain time to a sparrow's egg will result in a live creature breaking forth, which had not existed before, endowed with power to live and feel and grow and propagate his kind to the third and fourth thousandth generation. For some reason—a wise and good social reason—mankind, living in a crowded state, has surrounded the multiplication process with ritual and emotion and fear. No doubt this is absolutely justifiable and right, and, by experience, necessary; but it may in some cases have gone too far; and it seems to me to go too far when it denies that a Divine Spirit can enter into any human body except one that has been produced in an exceptional way. Whatever the mysterious phrase "Son of God" means,—and it probably means something mighty and true,—it cannot mean that. A belief in that is materialism rampant.

And yet even materialism need not be a term of abuse; for if matter be the living garment of God,—as it certainly is the temporary raiment of man,—and if the Divine Spirit be immanent in

everything that exists, it is certain that a glorified materialism must enshrine some elements of truth, when properly understood; nor should anyone deny the benefit of Sacraments, in spite of occasional exaggerations concerning them. But the vicarious expiation, the judicial punishment of the innocent, and the appeasement of an angry God, are surely now recognisable as savage inventions; though they have left their traces on surviving formulæ, which accordingly have to be explained away. And so likewise the superior virtue of a one-sided human origin, for any Redeemer or Exemplar of mankind, seems to me unworthy of a period of spiritual awakening, of a cleansing acceptance of the facts of nature, of a purification of the material universe by the recognised permeance of an immanent energising God, of whom we too are fragmentary, struggling, helpful portions.

II. Reality

What, then, are the Truths underlying the great mysteries connected with the appearance and work of Christ? Here I approach the positive part of my task, entering a region already flooded with literature; yet must I not shrink from an attempt to supplement negative criticism by such provisional and tentative positive judgment as I have been able to form, from the scientific point of view—the only kind of judgment to which I am entitled,—concerning the under-

lying Realities. No justification of this course should be necessary, because a fine jewel only flashes the brighter when turned about so as to expose every facet to the light; so I proceed without hesitation, though as briefly as is consistent with intelligibility, to set them down:

1. Incarnation with Pre-existence.
2. Revelation or Discovery.
3. Continuity and persistent Influence.

The utterance of science on these heads is not loud and is not positive, but I claim that at least it is not negative. No science asserts that our personality will cease a quarter of a century hence, nor does any science assert that it began half a century ago. Spiritual existence "before all worlds" is a legitimate creed.

No science maintains that the whole of our personality is incarnate here and now: it is in fact beginning to surmise the contrary, and to suspect the existence of a larger transcendental individuality, with which men of genius are in touch more than ordinary men. We may be all partial incarnations of a larger self. Incarnation of a portion of a divine spirit therefore involves no scientific dislocation or contradiction, nor need it involve any material mechanism other than that to which we are accustomed.[1] For only the germ is derived from others; the body is built under the guidance of the indwelling, living, personal entity: it is adapted to and serves to

[1] John i. 12–14; 1 John iii. 2.

display the features of that entity under the limitations and disabilities of a material aspect; as the epiphany of an artist's conception is restrained by the limitations of his medium, as well as by his lack of executive skill.

Granting, then, the advent of as lofty a Spirit as we can conceive,—perfectly human on the bodily side, with all that that implies, and perfectly Divine on the spiritual side, whatever that may mean,—what sort of result may be expected to follow?

Consider the position. Here is mankind, risen from the beasts, making gods in the likeness of its ancestors,—in something worse than its own likeness,—cruel, jealous, bloody gods, who order massacres of helpless non-combatants and cattle, the courts of whose temples and tabernacles are a shambles, served by a greedy self-seeking priesthood and by professional religious people who play to a gallery.[1] Into such a world,—that is to say, a world with these general characteristics, in spite of occasional bursts of brightness and much homely virtue,—imagine the thorough incarnation of a truly Divine Spirit; and what would be the consequences?

The immediate consequences we know. On the part of the priests, hostility and murder; on the part of the peasantry, curiosity growing into sympathy; on the part of a few earnest souls, love and adoration. But what in the long-run

[1] Matt. xxiii. 5.

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would be the permanent consequences? Surely a discovery of the truer nature of God: one of the veils would be drawn aside from the face of Deity, and there would partially emerge, not Jehovah any more than Baal, but a Being whom it was possible to love, to serve, to worship; for whom it is possible to live and work, and, if need be, die. There would be the beginnings of a real at-one-ment between man and God.[1]

Observe that the influence at work is exerted wholly on man. The attitude of God has changed no whit; there never was any hostility to be washed out in blood; He had felt no wrath at the blind efforts, the risings and sinkings, of men struggling in the mire from bestial to human attributes; there was nothing to appease. But there was plenty to reveal: an infinitude of compassion, an ideal of righteousness, the inevitableness of law, the hopelessness of rebellion,[2] the power of faith, the quenching of superstitious fear in filial love; a real and not a mechanical salvation, no legal quibble, but a deep eternal truth. Let man but see the face of God, so far as it can be revealed in the flesh, and he will catch a glimpse of a Holy of Holies such as he had not conceived. The savage invention of a jealous God, who resents the worship of anything but himself, who thinks more of his own glory and dignity than of the creative work of evolution, who arranges that if people do not

[1] John xiv. 7; Mark xv. 38. [2] John xvi. 8.

theorise correctly here and now they shall suffer eternal pain—all these ignorances fall into the region of blasphemous fables, henceforth to be promulgated by fanatics alone.

And yet let us be fair. The worship of Jehovah was based on a recognition of the majesty and sacredness of Law; an element nevermore to be destroyed. And as to punishment for wrong belief,—the notion of a penalty eternally attached to discordance or dislocation between ourselves and the Universe of which we are a part, is a true and luminous idea. When our beliefs are out of harmony with facts, when our theories are false, we are liable to act erroneously, and accordingly to suffer by conflict with inevitable law, even though we act in accordance with our faith, and so are not consciously wicked or infidel. The connexion between true theory and right action is real and close, although very likely the commonest faults of men are due less to wrong notions than to weak wills. But the errors due to wrong theory are liable to be much more really deadly[1]; there is no wickedness so violent as that organised by the fanatic who thinks he is doing God service, nor is there any harm worse than can follow the footsteps of a well-meaning blatant fool. And the penalty is in a sense eternal, that is to say æonic,[2]

[1] Matt. xxiii. 30, 34.

[2] There seems to be a popular idea abroad that the derivation of the word eternal signifies without end—I suppose from *e* and

for it is incurable except by mental and spiritual revolution. So long as wrong beliefs continue, so long there should be a sense of dislocation, a feeling of friction and of grit: the only remedy is to get right with the Universe. The sin and the damnation are co-eternal or coœval.

The law thus stated is no theologic dogma, it results from no arbitrary *fiat*, it is the commonplace expression of a natural fact. It is exemplified in the running of every piece of human machinery, and in the working of our own bodies. Anything out of gear is a source of disquiet, of inefficiency, and of pain; health and happiness result from a restoration of harmony.

How the grit got into the cosmic organism may be a hard question; perhaps it has never yet been out. This may be a narrow, temporal way of conceiving the matter—but let it pass for the present. Anyhow we could not have become what we are without it; and the word "grit" has acquired a forcible psychic connotation. After all, grit is only matter out of place; it has no intrinsic or absolute quality. Whether it exist for good or for ill, we did not put it there; though it is our privilege to help to remove it. We are artisans of the Creator, at least in this outlying

terminus—and that the word æonic is milder. But in truth they mean just the same; only one is the Latin and the other the Greek form. The supposed popular derivation is a false one.

planetary district, and a magnificent co-operation is our highest privilege.[1]

Almost every widespread doctrine has a meaning and enshrines a truth, visible when freed from blasphemous accretions; and the doctrine of æonic damnation, even as too specifically interpreted by Athanasius, is a glimpse of the truth that whosoever will enter into the joy of the Lord must endeavour to understand rightly the cosmic scheme,[2] and that except a man get into harmony with Truth and Reality he cannot ascend to the destiny in store for him—he cannot be "saved."

In the same way a germ of truth can be detected in that persistent element of popular theology, the idea of sacrificial and vicarious suffering. There *must* be such a germ, else the belief could not have proved itself of such "saving" power;—and even the current crudities of expression may have had their use, in the recent transitional age of the earth's history — the geological epoch during which the evolution of man has been beginning—that uneducated age out of which we cannot yet be said to have emerged. The essence of truth contained in it would appear to be that the responsible task of evolution from animal to higher man, the struggle *humanam condere gentem*, could not be undertaken and carried through even by Deity without grievous suffering and agonising patience[3]; and this sympathetic shudder through the whole of

[1] John v. 17. [2] Matt. xxii. 11. [3] Rom. viii. 22.

Existence might well be parabolically expressed in terms of current altruistic sacrificial legend. Subject to proper interpretation, the legend has a meaning: the mistake lay in imagining it an expiatory transaction, instead of a natural and necessary process, quite unlike the alternate moods of fury and affection sometimes exhibited by a chief to slaves.

It was not a *bare* necessary and natural process, however; the aspects of Deity are so infinite that they cannot be grasped simultaneously. The personal aspect is as vivid as any of the others,[1] and, from this point of view, the genuineness of Divine suffering, no matter how inevitable,[2] has always been recognised as a revelation of Divine and Fatherly love.

The redeeming and elevating efficacy of such a conviction is manifest. The perception of something in the Universe which not only makes for righteousness, but which loves and sympathises in the process; and yet is no mere indiscriminate charity—weakly relieving man from the consequences of his blunders, or stealthily undermining his power of self-help—but a true benevolence, which healthily and strongly and if need be sternly convinces him that the path of duty is the path of joy,[3] that sacrifice and not selfishness is the road to the heights of existence,[4] that it is far better to

[1] See Chapter II. § iv. p. 34 above.
[2] Luke xv. 4. [3] Matt. xxv. 21, 30.
[4] Matt. xvi. 25; John xii. 32.

suffer wrong than to do wrong:[1]—such a perception inevitably raises man far above "the yelp of the beast," "saves" him, saves him truly, from æons of degradation, and enables him to "stand on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher."

Selfishness long continued must lead to isolation, and so to a sort of practical extinction:[2] it is like a disintegrating or repulsive force in the material cosmos, while love is like a cohesive and constructive force. All this is no new doctrine, thank goodness! it has been preached and practised by the prophets and saints of the human race for generations—by some mighty ones even before the advent of Jesus of Nazareth. For that love is the quickening force of the spiritual universe, and that its fruition would lead to superhumanity, had been clearly stated before it was in the Fourth Gospel supremely emphasised; and the words put by the Socrates of Plato into the mouth of Diotima the prophetess of Mantineia[3] have a deep and growing meaning for those who have ears to hear.

A discovery once made by the human race is permanent: it fades no more, and its influence grows from age to age. We are now beginning to realise a further stage in the process of atone-

[1] Plato, *Gorgias* 469, conversation with Polus; and elsewhere.

[2] *Cecilia de Noël*, by Lanoe Falconer.

[3] Plato's *Symposium*, 191–212. Best translation in Myers's *Human Personality*, vol. i. p. 113.

ment; we are rising to the conviction that we are a part of nature, and so a part of God; that the whole creation — the One and the Many and All-One—is working together towards some great end; and that now, after ages of development, we have at length become conscious portions of the great scheme, and can co-operate in it with knowledge and with joy. We are no aliens in a foreign universe governed by an outside God; we are parts of a developing whole, all enfolded in an embracing and interpenetrating love, of which we too, each to other, sometimes experience the joy too deep for words. And this strengthening vision, this sense of union with Divinity, this, and not anything artificial or legal or commercial, is what science will some day tell us is the inner meaning of the Redemption of Man.

"For not by eastern windows only
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly;
But westward, look, the land is bright!"

CHAPTER XI

SIN, SUFFERING, AND WRATH

IN the last chapter certain great topics are dealt with so briefly that if left without amplification they may give rise to misunderstanding; indeed their treatment has already aroused some criticism, notably an extremely friendly comment by Dr. Talbot, now Bishop of Southwark, published in the *Hibbert Journal* for July 1904, wherein, while criticising judicially, he nevertheless holds out a hand of welcome.

This article was replied to sufficiently in the succeeding number of the *Hibbert Journal*, and not much of my reply need be here reproduced.

I will only say that whereas in the greater part of the present book, and indeed of my writings generally, the mode of treatment aims at being positive rather than negative—seeking to construct rather than to destroy, and hoping to replace error quietly by substitution of truth—the last chapter does to some extent take a negative or destructive attitude, and accordingly demands extremely careful treatment.

I do not conceive of myself, however, as attacking Theology or Theological doctrine: I discern

an element of truth in nearly every doctrine, perhaps in quite every doctrine, which the human race has been able to believe for a long period; but I am seeking to scrutinise more closely, and if possible display to greater advantage, that side of those doctrines which faces us across the frontier of our scientific territory. This side has been less efficiently attended to by the builders than the façade devoted to edification; and some of our own outworks approach so near to the Theological position on its more prosaic side, that an occasional raid, inspired by admiration and conducted with reverence, may be pardoned.

It looks to me as if part of the building were needlessly obscured by coatings and stucco and excrescences, once thought ornamental. Perhaps this extraneous matter had the useful effect of protecting the building through times of ignorance and violence, but some of it is now seen to be little better than disfigurement and crudity, hiding the beautiful structure beneath; it was this extraneous matter alone that I intended to attack in my last chapter.

But in this legitimate restoration work, at the present day, a number of operatives are engaged; some doing their occasional best from outside, like myself; others, as regular workmen acting from within, like Dr. Talbot. With his scheme of the structure, as seen from his point of view and stated in the *Hibbert Journal*, I have extremely little cause to disagree. He is one of

the many whom I referred to as having already emancipated themselves from errors of the past to a large extent; and if it still seems to me that here and there in his statement traces of crudeness remain, who am I that I should suppose myself capable of infallibly detecting and evaluating all forms of crudity?

Professor J. H. B. Masterman admits the crudity of ordinary statements of Christian doctrine, but justifies it as necessary to catch the attention of ignorant laymen who are accustomed to speak in terms of "blood." I think it possible for the clergy to over-estimate the crudeness and ignorance of the laity. A professional jargon is apt to be employed which by habit may sound appropriate on Sundays, but does not represent the mental attitude of anyone at other times. Perhaps spirit and character once resided in the blood, as compassion in the bowels, virulence in the spleen, love in the heart, and other emotions in other viscera; but few persons imagine that they live there now. I say nothing against the methods of the Salvation Army in its own sphere of activity: these may be justified by their results. I somewhat doubt whether ordinary Church procedure is so justified.

I suggest that it is not wise to assume too invincible an ignorance on the part of habitual worshippers. It may, for instance, be of doubtful wisdom to withdraw documents from common use on this ground alone, and at the same time to

suggest that nevertheless they convey essential truth to clerics instructed in refinements of interpretation; it is rather too suggestive of the attitude of the pharisees in John vii. 49. The really learned in theology are respected by all, but they are infrequently encountered. It would be fairer to admit that some of the documents in use are themselves imperfect and antiquated, that they have been in many respects outgrown, and that truth as now perceived can now be more clearly expressed. But I refrain from any more ecclesiastical suggestions.

The most weighty indictment brought against me is that I appear to ignore or minimise the heinousness of sin, and that I deprecate the attribution of wrath, anger, vengeance, and the like, to the Creator of all things. The Bishop says, on the other hand, that these terms are scriptural, and that it was the enthusiasm generated by the feeling of sin overcome that constituted the motive power of primitive Christianity.

Perhaps, however, I may unobtrusively remark that such expressions as righteous vengeance, angry Father, wrathful Lamb, do not seem satisfactory forms whereby to represent what the Bishop well calls "a stately and austere conception of order." Nor is it likely that "the bright front and buoyant tread of early discipleship" arose from anything so negative as sin overcome: it was not that which animated the Apostles; and though it certainly contributed to

the inspiration of the Magdalene, we should hardly speak of "bright front and buoyant tread" in her case,—at least not on the traditional though perhaps erroneous view of her character. Something more positive is needed to explain any living and energising enthusiasm.

The incidental treatment of sin in Chapter X. is, however, one of the points on which further explanation is certainly desirable; and all the supplementary points raised by opponents, with which I now propose to deal, may be grouped under four heads as follows:

1. That evolutionary treatment of sin—that is to say, a recognition of the liability to temptation and failure as a stage through which free creatures, rising by evolution, must needs in some measure pass, on their way to a strong and high character—that such treatment is apt to minimise unduly the sense of sinfulness.

2. That it is misleading to deny the revealed Wrath of the Holy One against sin.

3. That heresy lurks in any non-professional treatment of the relation between the Humanity and Divinity of Christ.

4. That while controverting the notion of vicarious punishment, the true significance of the doctrine of a vicarious Atonement may be missed.

Let us take these points in order.

1. On page 213, above, the following sentence occurs:

"As a matter of fact the higher man of to-day

is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment: his mission, if he is good for anything, is to be up and doing."

When writing these words I was well aware that they laid me open to a retort based upon John ix. 41 and 1 John i. 8; nevertheless the statement seems to me true "as a matter of fact," provided by "higher men" are understood pioneers of thought, or leaders in the world's activity,—whether they are working in the public eye, or in the study or in the office, or anywhere save in the cloister, where naturally the sense of sin may be dominant. Perhaps when so put it will be granted, merely as a matter of fact, if saints are excluded, and if no moral judgment in favour of the thesis is claimed or supposed to be involved in the statement.

But it will be contended that more than a matter of fact was implied in that sentence, that there was an element of judgment also, and that it was one of approbation: that the epithet "higher" signified that a man who was up and doing, instead of recapitulating and mourning over his sins, was in the path of progress, and was to be praised rather than blamed. Undoubtedly I did mean that too; and in order implicitly to justify that attitude, without presumption and without tedious contention, I gave two Biblical references — one to Matt. xxiv. 46, where the "servant who is found so doing" (that is to say, doing his duty, whatever it may be) is authoritatively "blessed,"

and the other to the warning contained in Matt. xii. 43,—that apologue about the fate of a house which was left unoccupied after having been cleansed and decorated.

It may surely, without unorthodoxy, be held that there are two ways of overcoming sin and sinful tendencies, though they are not at all mutually exclusive: one the direct way, of concentrating attention on them with brooding and lamentation; the other the indirect, and, as I think, the safer and more efficacious and altogether more profitable, way, of putting in so many hours' work per day, and of excluding weeds from the garden by energetic cultivation of healthy plants.

It will be said that "brooding and lamentation" is not a fit description for the exercises of religion, that a safeguard of a higher order than any terrestrial occupation can be secured by conscious emotional penitence and aspiration. It may be so, with some people: but is it so always? Surely the most passionate litanies, the loftiest religious ecstasies, must ultimately justify themselves by results in practice: otherwise the excessive emotion, fruitlessly aroused, may degenerate into positive ill (Amos v. 19).

But however this may be, there can be no doubt that constant effort is necessary if we are to carry out in conduct what in times of meditation we see to be highest and best. We must all of us have known what it is to be compelled to say, not always, nor often, it is to be hoped,—it is as

stupid to exaggerate in these as in any other matters,—but occasionally in the course of our lives, or even constantly in connexion with some minor ingrained habit which we should like to overcome,

> "Video meliora, proboque,
> Deteriora sequor."

And this doing not what we see to be best, but something inferior which we do not really approve or wish to do, is what constitutes one aspect of sin. Plato, indeed, argues in the *Gorgias* that a wicked man is not really obeying his own will, that he is enslaved and acting contrary to his true self; but whether that be so or not, few of us have the spirit to be wilful sinners. Wilful sin is, as has been often said, rebellion and lawlessness, the misuse and misapplication of natural powers; it is akin to dirt, to disease, to weeds—*i.e.* to matter and cells and plants out of place, and working harm instead of good. It is like a fire escaped from control and consuming instead of serving. Even so a banked-up lake, constructed for the water-supply of a city, if it burst its embankment, may whelm villages in flood.

Our business is to restrain and control, to direct and guide, the forces of nature and our own forces. Our nascent powers, our faculties, are neither moral nor immoral in themselves, but only as they are developed and used. The man of vigorous will, rightly trained and directed, may

become the man of wholesome energy. There is some valuable material being wasted in our prisons: unreclaimed soil festering for lack of plough and harrow. Good men of small and restrained activity may not constitute the most efficient, or the most approved, instruments of progress. The ascetic may endeavour to avoid all danger,—by never making a mountain lake, by never lighting a fire, by never going to sea, by running no risks and living a poverty-stricken existence,—and may succumb after all: as soldiers may be economised in war till they fall victims to some miserably ignominious disease. We are called upon rather for full exercise of all our powers, for full vigour of life, but subject to discipline and reason and restraint. What we call vices and virtues utilise very similar vital forces: their differing character arises from the direction that we give them. Every activity can be deflected from the vicious into the virtuous direction; and an unsought joy is the reward.

While dealing with these everyday considerations, it is desirable to avoid misconception by explicitly making the admission that doubtless there is a sense in which radical imperfection can be predicated of the whole human race without exception: the sense in which the heavens can be said to be unclean, and the angels to be chargeable with folly; the sense in which Job, though able to rebut the charge of hidden wickedness brought by his friends, was

willing abundantly to admit vileness when accosted by the Deity.

For devotional purposes this comparison of humanity with infinite Perfection, and infinite attributes generally, may be appropriate and useful, though no finite emendation can be effective against it; as we rise in the scale our ideals rise too, so that there is a constant sense of imperfection. We might anticipate that the feeling aroused by contemplation of Infinitude would be one of humility and abasement rather than one of contrition and penitence, but we have to admit that saints have found it otherwise, and that their experience is conclusive.

2. So much for practical and human considerations; but there is another and more important matter, on which explanation is needed,—namely, where I contend that the sacrifice of Christ need not be regarded as expiatory, or as appeasing the righteous anger of a wrathful God, because —so it is said on page 228—

"He had felt no wrath at the blind efforts, the risings and sinkings, of men struggling in the mire from bestial to human attributes; there was nothing to appease."

This has been attacked as unscriptural: "Angry with the wicked every day," "The wrath of the Lamb," and a multitude of familiar texts, can easily be quoted.

Very well, the epithet "unscriptural" has no

coercive force unless the text appealed to carries with it a conviction of its own inspiration. There is plenty of "anger" in the Old Testament undoubtedly, but that is just where one would expect to find it, on the survival hypothesis; and I doubt not that the Prophets had plenty to make them angry.

Of the two texts just quoted at random, the first is from Psalm vii. 11, and the words "with the wicked" (being printed in italics, and amended in the Revised Version) seem to have been a gratuitous interpolation of the translators—an evident attempt to make intelligible the supposed sentence, "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry every day." The Prayer Book version —more effective as usual—renders it thus, "God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient, and God is provoked every day"; which is doubtless as true as any statement of the kind can be.

"The wrath of the Lamb" occurs only in Revelation, so far as I know; and there also is to be found that Oriental hyperbole, intensified from Isaiah and from a common industry of the country, about the vintage of blood flowing "to the horse-bridles" from the trodden winepress of the wrath of God. The author's feelings are evidently overcharged. And if we had lived in times of really efficient persecution we too might have tried, less poetically, to assuage our indignant helplessness in the same sort of way.

But it is scarcely worth while to waste time

in discussing the relative authority of texts: every one must be aware that this is no rose-water world; the things that have happened in it, and the things that may yet happen in it, are appalling. We must admit the force of experiences which gave birth to ejaculations such as Luke xii. 5 and Hebrews x. 31, whoever may have been their author, and I am glad of the opportunity of enlarging upon this subject of sin and Divine anger somewhat; it was quite too briefly and superficially treated in Chapter X.: indeed it was not really dealt with at all.

It suited the priests to say that God was angry when a budding nation desired to have a king in order to weld it together. It suited them to say that he was angry when prisoners were taken captive instead of being massacred; and again that he was wroth when the first census was contemplated. So also God has been represented as angry with idolaters, not ostensibly because some special practices of idol-worship must have been debasing, but because he was "jealous." There are plenty of good reasons against idolatry among intelligent and "chosen" people, but this is not one of them: nor is it to be supposed that the stock of a tree is ever really worshipped, even when prostrated to. An idol, to ignorant and undeveloped people, is a symbol of something which they are really worshipping under a material form and embodiment: the sensuous presentation assists their infantile efforts

towards abstract thought, as material sacraments help people in a higher stage of religious development. But some of these helps should be outgrown. An adult mathematician hardly needs a geometrical figure, crudely composed of fragments of chalk or smears of plumbago or ink, to help him to reason; and if he uses such a diagram he is aware that he is not really attending to it, but is reasoning about ideal and unrealisable perfections; he has soared above the symbol, and is away among the cementing laws of the universe.

If an image or a tree-trunk or other object helps a savage to meditate on some divine and intractable conception,—if it has been so used by thousands of his ancestors, and has acquired a halo of reverence through antiquity and by the accumulation of human emotion lavished upon it,—a missionary should think twice before he is rude to it, or abuses it or pulls it down. We do not rebuke a child for lavishing a wealth of nascent maternal affection on some grotesque black-Betty of a wooden rag-covered doll; we do not despise, we honour, a regiment content to be decimated so it may save its flag,—which materially is almost a nonentity. And so if we send missionaries, we should send competent men, who will gradually educate, by implanting useful arts and positive virtues; and we should tell these messengers, clearly, that negative and iconoclastic teaching may be very cruel.

These things depend upon grade attained. It was very right for Hebrew prophets to feel indignant, and to wax sarcastic, when they saw the degenerate worship of a moderately enlightened people descending to the level of a grinning idol or the stock of a tree; and even the most enlightened of them may have felt that to replace such symbols as these by the more advanced representation of an angry and jealous God would be a spiritual help of the highest kind possible to a nation at such a stage of ethical development. In this manner the texts concerning anger and jealousy can be amply accounted for.

Moreover, like most other symbolism, they embody a real truth. Quite irrespective of texts in its favour, we may be willing to recognise Divine wrath as a real and terrible thing; though we must also be ready to admit that the gloom of religions antecedent to Christianity, and its own later struggle amid nascent civilisation, overshadowed the Gospel message unduly. And fear was a powerful weapon in the hands of priests, which they did not fail to employ. But I feel no contradiction between all this and the above quotation from page 228. So far as I can judge, it is *not* likely that a Deity operating through a process of evolution can feel wrath at the blind efforts of his creatures struggling upward in the mire. I judge rather that the human impulse to lend them a pitiful and helpful hand can with difficulty be restrained,—can indeed only be

restrained by lofty and far-seeing Wisdom, and by perception of "the far-off interest of tears."

Nevertheless, I am sure that what may without irreverence be humanly spoken of as fierce Wrath against sin, and even against a certain class of sinner, is a Divine attribute. But, then, what do we mean by "sin" in this connection? It is a term which, in a different sense from charity, likewise covers a multitude. I do not wish to enter upon a dissertation on the nature of sin in general, from the scientific standpoint. For our present purpose we can regard the matter quite simply, as something of which we have all plenty of experience; but I maintain that when we are speaking of the sin against which God's anger blazes, we do not mean the sins of failure, the burden of remorse, the acts which cause contrition and penitence on the part of a saint or a child or a labouring man—a labouring man or woman of any class; we mean something quite other than that. And I assume that therein we are consistent with the doctrines of all the Churches. Even the ejaculation "Woe upon ye" may probably be better translated "Alas for ye"; for is it not in eastern custom often applied to a mourning and despairing self?

If not a wicked absurdity, it is surely a libel to assert that God is angry with ordinary human failings, and with the dismal lapses from virtue of poor outcasts of civilisation. We are familiar, for instance, with the fierce wrath of Christ,—his

language was denunciatory in the extreme: but against what sort of offences? It was not the publicans and the harlots whom he stigmatised as a generation of vipers, or whom he warned of the damnation of hell; rather it was some specimens of the unco' guid of that day—people perfectly satisfied with themselves, people ready to forbid deeds of healing on the Sabbath, and eager to stifle the holiest if they had the chance[1]—it was with these that he was angry, not with anyone who could be described as helplessly and inefficiently struggling out of the mire towards better things.

There were sins of which he was genuinely ashamed, so that he stooped and wrote upon the ground when they were suddenly obtruded upon his notice by coarse experimenters: shame so acute that even those ruffians had the grace subsequently to slink away; but it was stoning of the Prophets, wilful blindness to the Highest, it was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that excited his fiercest reprobation.

Just as it is impossible for the human race at any given time to select that one of their number who will be best remembered a thousand years hence, so it is difficult for us to judge what class of people are rendering themselves most liable to high Displeasure now. I suppose that the respectable and religious world of Judæa was genuinely astonished, and not a little scandalised,

[1] Mark iii. 5, 6, 29.

at its vigorous denunciation by an itinerant Preacher, long ago; and it is just possible that to-day those self-satisfied people who shut their eyes to truth, and propagate error, are at least as harmful to the general advance as are some individuals whom Society for its own safety finds it necessary to keep in seclusion.[1]

A Church which, let us say, excommunicates Tolstoi may possibly be composed of pious individuals whom it does not become us to judge; but I can conceive that in its corporate capacity any Church which opposes reform, which persistently takes the wrong side, which sustained abuses such as the *droits de seigneur* in the past, and upholds other only less flagrant abuses to-day, may be regarded as deserving of vigorous Denunciation. And if such an institution, whether in this or in some neighbouring country, should happen to fall upon evil days, it may find itself unsuccessful in its endeavour to fasten the blame upon anything but itself.

There are many grades of sin; and anyone may know the kind of sin which excites the anger of God, by bethinking him of the kind which arouses his own best and most righteous

[1] And, incidentally, may it not be also possible that the omission on the part of Society to make any serious and satisfactory effort to train and humanise and reform those whom it thus takes under its providential control (not to mention their subjection to the inhuman device of solitary confinement) is liable to be regarded in High Quarters as deserving of reprobation just as severe as that accorded to any more actively committed crime?

anger. I can imagine that the infernal proceedings of Nero and of the Holy Inquisition were repugnant and nauseating to the Universe to a degree which was almost unbearable. The fierce indignation that would blaze out if one were maliciously to torture a child or an animal in view of an ordinary man or woman, would surely be a spark of the Divine wrath; and we have been told that a millstone round the neck of a child-abuser is too light a penalty.

Sins of this kind are a boil, an abscess, on the Universe: they must be attacked and cured through human co-operation, they are hardly tractable otherwise.[1] Just as, in the complex aggregate of cells we call our body, the dominant intelligence cannot unaided cope with its own disease, but must depend on the labours of its micro-organisms, the phagocytes, which swarm to any poisoned plague spot, and there actively and painfully struggle with and inflame and attack the evil, till one side or other is overcome: so it is with man as an active ingredient in this part of the universe. We men, too, are an essential constituent of the system: our fullest power lying dormant until stimulated into activity by disease of the body politic. We are the white corpuscles of the cosmos!

If it is possible for a man at times to feel a sort of hatred and anger against his own weaker and worser self, so I can imagine a God feeling

[1] Psalm cxv. 16.

what may be imperfectly spoken of as disgust and wrath at defects which still exist in his Universe—in Himself, dare we say?—defects for which in a manner he is in some sort responsible; defects which he has either caused, or for ultimate reasons permitted, or has not yet, in the present stage of evolution, been able to cure consistently with full education and adequate scope for free development of personality;—defects which surely his conscious creatures will assist him to remove, now that the bare possibility of the existence of these ferocious evils has done its salutary and ultimately beneficent work.

In this sense, therefore, it would be inappropriate to deny any amount of wrath against sin, and even against the blatant sinner—the class of people who can only be impressed by the falling of a stone which shall grind them to powder. But it is not for people in the vicious state that the consolations of religion are available, they are not the bruised reed whom he will not break: and there is no sense in perplexing ordinary, struggling, kindly, weak, unhappy humanity, with alleged fearful penalties attaching to even minor disobedience,—penalties which must be exacted somehow, no matter much from whom. Nor need we spoil people's conception of the Fatherhood of God with distorted legends, representing him as a Roman Father who will not scruple to visit their sins

and shortcomings upon the innocent body of his own Son, since that is the only condition on which his wrath may be turned away and his hand not stretched out still.

3. There is one sentence in my last chapter wherein I appear to suggest that Christ's body was human, his spirit divine; thus making a possibly untenable though simple distinction between the vehicle and the manifestation, and trespassing on a theological territory which is full of heretical pit-falls.

It would have been better to avoid even the appearance of entering on so large a question as the nature of Christ by a mere side-door. My object at the moment was not anything so ambitious, but merely to indicate what would be the effect on mankind of the arrival of a personage, with a human and therefore accessible and mortal body, animated by a spirit of divine perfection. I wished to urge that among the results of the thorough incarnation of a truly Divine Spirit would be the beginnings of a real atonement between man and God; and that the influence exerted would be exerted wholly on man. Farther than that I did not then intend to go; nor do I propose to go much farther now, though the temptation is considerable. It is easy to recognise that the subjects of the Incarnation and the Resurrection are profoundly difficult, and yet to feel impelled to

express surprise at the language which eminent theologians sometimes permit themselves to employ. I take the following sentence from Canon Moberly's article in *Lux Mundi*:

P. 236. "No one will now dispute that Jesus died upon the Cross. If He did not on the third day rise again from that death to life—*cadit quæstio*—all Christian dogma, all Christian faith, is at an end."

I suppose it is intended as a paraphrase of St. Paul's "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain." But the two statements are perfectly different. If Christ be not risen in some sense or other,—if his death was the end of him, according to the current but perhaps not quite correct conception of the death of a dog,—then indeed is the prospect blank.

But "rise again from death to life on the third day" must mean far more than persistent existence and influence: it suggests exceptional treatment of the material body: it implies revivification of the actual corpse. Indeed, the fourth Article of the Anglican Church definitely asserts that, and more. But an attempt to link the whole of Christian faith inextricably with an anatomical statement about flesh and bones is rash.

Again:

P. 237. "No one to-day disputes that He was truly man. Is it true that He was very

God? It is either true or false. As to the fact there are only the two alternatives. And between the two the gulf is impassable. If it is not false it is true. If it is not absolutely true it is absolutely false."

Do theologians always know what they mean when they glibly use, in a serious and solemn sense, the awful term God? Have they any notion of the Universe at all? Are they still limited to tribal or planetary conceptions of Deity? They talk, or used to talk, about "dispensations." We ourselves, as a nation, give dispensations to children or savages, other than we should give to developed people; a planetary dispensation is one thing, a planetary God another. These attempted identifications of the Messiah with the Most High, verge on the blasphemous. When Peter was blessed for a burst of bold and enthusiastic affirmation, and adequate recognition of Christ's divine nature, he said no such thing as that. What he said was, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

As to affirming that Christ is either God or is not God, and that there is nothing more to be said: there are few complex propositions of which so simple a positive or negative affirmation can be made. For instance, it is almost proverbially difficult to reply to the childish question whether a given historical character was "good" or was not good. By discriminating between the attri-

butes which were, and the attributes which were not, and could not be, displayed through a human body, we avoid artificial theories of *kenosis*, and escape some puzzles which, when closely examined, are seen to be absurdities. How it can be orthodox to hold Dr. Moberly's view, in face of—say—Mark xiv. 36; John xiv. 28, xv. 1, xvi. 28, is more than can readily be understood.

The word God must have an infinite diversity of meaning, and two uses of the term are prominent. One connotes vaguely the Absolute Sustainer and Comprehender of all existence: the other signifies such detailed conception of Godhead as the human race has been able to frame. This latter has been helped on mightily by the revelation of Jesus, among those who can accept it:—the revelation of genuinely human faculties and feelings, and even something of the unconscious simplicity of childhood,[1] in the Divine Being,—and the further revelation, so enthusiastically glimpsed by the youthful David near the end of Browning's poem "Saul," the perception that Divine as well as human love may be and actually is strong enough to submit to sacrifice and genuine suffering on behalf of the beloved.

This revelation and perception may to some have become so keen and piercing that to no other aspect of Godhead can they pay attention. These are they who say that Christ was very

[1] Luke ix. 48.

God in the absolute sense; and subjectively they may be right. It is a statement, not of what they conceive of Christ, but of what they mean by God. It means that Christ fully satisfies all their conceptions of Deity.

4. Lastly we come to the doctrine of a vicarious Atonement, and the sense in which that can be considered to embody a genuine truth. The late Bishop of Southampton, Dr. Arthur Lyttelton, in his article on the Atonement in *Lux Mundi* (pp. 282, 283), says that—

"It was from the Law that the Jews derived their religious language; their conceptions of sacrifice, of atonement, of the effects of sin, were moulded by the influence of the Mosaic ceremonies. . . . The sacrificial ceremonies and language of the Law throw light upon the apostolic conception of the Sacrifice, the Atonement, of Christ."

With this historical estimate I entirely agree. The ceremony of the Scapegoat, and indeed the whole so-called Mosaic system, are clearly responsible for a great deal of the doctrine which penetrated into the New Testament, and has survived even to the present day.

But then it will be found that Dr. Lyttelton constantly employs the word "propitiation":—a word which embodies compactly what I regard as an error or a crudity, and serves to focus the issue. The basis of his contention throughout

is given succinctly in the following passage (p. 282):

"Examination of the sacrificial system of the Old Testament is necessary in a discussion of the doctrine of the Atonement, for several reasons.

"The institutions of the Law were, in the first place, ordained by God, and therefore intended to reveal in some degree His purposes, His mind towards man."

That is where I join issue. I would rather go to the opposite extreme and say that the Gospel was an attempt to break away from sacrificial and priestly tradition; that the "not destroy but fulfil" referred to the major denunciations and other accumulations of race-experience,—which were on right lines as far as they went, and only required supplementing,—not to the minor institutions and superstitions which had become an incubus destructive of living personal religion.

We may not all in every respect be equally enamoured of the parable of the Prodigal Son—a subterranean sympathy with the sentiments expressed by his elder brother is not uncommon—but the whole story is very human, very familiar, and full of manifest inspiration; and without wishing to press it unduly, we must admit that any feeling of wrath against the offender, or even against the offence, is rather conspicuously absent from its scheme. The sense of guilt is there, in pronounced form, but

as a one-sided feeling; and its paternal counterpart seems not to have been removed by expiatory sacrifice, nor by propitiation of any kind, but simply to be non-existent. There is very little residue of the Mosaic dispensation in that story.

So markedly has this been felt indeed, by some preachers, that, in dismay at finding themselves adrift from their familiar moorings, a few have actually seized upon the fatted calf and tried to construct some kind of propitiatory sacrifice out of that!

But observe that I have never said a word against vicarious *suffering*: I have contended against the notion of vicarious *punishment*—a very different idea. Though I cannot agree with everything that is said even about vicarious suffering—real though it admittedly is. For instance, the Bishop of Southwark urges that the vicarious suffering of the Atonement did somehow "redress, cancel, redeem, propitiate,"—these words are used in a private letter, while their substance appears in his criticism above referred to,—and he appears to insist that the idea of a Father who is necessarily hard upon us because himself so righteous, is part of the orthodox view. With great deference I cannot admit the appropriateness of the above verbs to modern insight: they seem to me saturated with the atmosphere of pagan survival and of ante-Isaiah Jewish traditions. No one supposes them to apply to vicious and persistent sins; and if

they only apply to negligences and ignorances for which we are heartily sorry and earnestly repent, they are unnecessary, except in a subjective and comforting sense.

But then this is a real sense: there must be some meaning in the perennial experience of relief and renovation at the Cross. Was it not there that Christian's burden fell, — type of many thousands of devout persons? Is there no regenerating agency at work in justification of this mass of real human experience? Far be it from me to doubt it; and it behoves me, who have presumed to emphasise one aspect, to emphasise the other also, in order to make the picture not too obviously incomplete or one-sided.

I am now going to use the word "sin" in its theological and, so to speak, "official" sense,— the sense of imperfection, disunion, lack of harmony, the struggle among the members that St. Paul for all time expressed; there is usually associated with it a sense of impotence, a recognition of the impossibility of achieving peace and unity in one's own person, a feeling that aid must be forthcoming from a higher source. It is this feeling which enables the spectacle of any noble self-sacrificing human action to have an elevating effect, it is this which gropes after the possibilities of the highest in human nature, it is a feeling which for large tracts of this planet has found its highest stimulus and completest

satisfaction in the life and death of Christ. All religions worthy of the name are based upon some heroic and self-sacrificing life,—upon some man with clearer vision than his fellows, who is in closer touch and sympathy with the Divine—one whose strong nobility of character is in vivid contrast with our own miserable imperfection.

And the special power of Christianity is not founded upon insight and heroism alone: Paul was able to bear the sufferings of this present time with heroism, but Paul was not crucified for us, nor are we baptised in the name of Paul. No, there is evidently something unique about the majesty of Jesus as Christ which raises him above the rank of man; and the willingness of such a Being to share our nature, to live the life of a peasant, and to face the horrible certainty of execution by torture, in order personally to help those whom he was pleased to call his brethren, is a race-asset which, however masked and overlaid with foreign growths, yet gleams through every covering and suffuses the details of common life with fragrance.

This conspicuously has been a redeeming, or rather a regenerating, agency—I know nothing of "cancelling," "redressing," or "propitiating": those words I repudiate; but it has regenerated,—for by filling the soul with love and adoration and fellow-feeling for the Highest, the old cravings have often been almost hypnotically rendered distasteful and repellent, the bondage

of sin has been loosened from many a spirit, the lower entangled self has been helped from the slough of despond and raised to the shores of a larger hope, whence it can gradually attain to harmony and peace.

There are other parts of the Hon. Arthur Lyttelton's beautiful essay on the Atonement in *Lux Mundi* to which I should like to refer. I find myself in agreement with the initial, and with the concluding, three or four pages almost entirely. By dint of working through a maze of rather intractable material, which he treats as well as it is possible for it to be treated, he arrives at what I conceive to be the legitimate conclusion. He discards the infinite punishment doctrine completely, he brushes lightly aside M'Leod Campbell's infinite-repentance modification of it, and he attempts to justify the view of a perfect sacrifice.

So far as he associates this with vicarious *penalty*, and emphasises the *propitiatory* aspect of the Atonement, he goes, as I consider, wrong; he even argues that in his agony and death the Son must have been engaged in propitiating not only his Father's wrath but his own also; that he was, in fact, taking upon himself, and so both retrospectively and prospectively warding off from others, the wrath of the Lamb. This truly is a logical outcome of the orthodox doctrine, but it should serve as one of the modes of discrediting

some of the crudity in that doctrine, and reducing it to a kind of absurdity.

But when Dr. Lyttelton arrives at page 310 he has emerged from Mosaic mediævalism into an atmosphere of truth: it is *true* that Christ bore his sufferings, as we should learn to bear ours, victoriously and in unbroken union with God. He showed that the highest and the best might have to suffer, so long as the world was imperfect.

In an admirable essay on "Pain" by J. R. Illingworth in *Lux Mundi* this part of the matter is put with great clearness:

"Once for all the sinless suffering of the Cross has parted sin from suffering with a clearness of distinction never before achieved. . . . The sight of perfect sinlessness combined with perfect suffering has cleared our view for ever. . . . Sin indeed always brings suffering in its train, but the suffering we now see to be of the nature of its antidote. . . . But while sin involves suffering, suffering does not involve sin. . . . We suffer because we sin, but we also sin because we decline to suffer. . . . The pleasures of each generation evaporate in air; it is their pains that increase the spiritual momentum of the world."

And so on (p. 123 to the end).

The problem which had puzzled the ages—the problem of the book of Job, of the tower of Siloam—was practically solved.

And Christ showed how the sting might be taken out of all suffering by meeting it with a

spirit of undaunted faith. The power of sin lay in the presence of an evil and rebellious disposition. Rid of that,—and though pains and sorrows would come as before, they could be faced in a spirit, not of submission only, but of undying love and hope and almost joy.

So too the cognate or complementary problem of the Greek Dramatists — the problem which looms large in the tragedies of Euripides in especial—the dread that man is the sport and plaything of omnipotence—the fear, the paralysing fear, of caprice or even wickedness on the part of higher powers—the dismal uncertainty whether pain is not sometimes mere gratuitous torture, the outcome of divine jealousy or malevolence or anger or some other pagan attribute : all this was somehow removed from mankind by the victory of Christ, and except in a few individual cases has never very seriously troubled it since.

Not only was comparative indifference to suffering and to temporal loss the outcome of it, but there was superadded, in extreme cases, a certain glory in suffering, in emulation of so noble an example : to fill up, as was hyperbolically said, what was behind. This feeling infused such vitality into the Apostles and the early Church as to carry them victoriously through a terrible period of danger and untold misery. It made them staunch ; men and emperors found that they simply could not effectively hurt those whom this faith had seized. And in less troublous times

the element of suffering and poverty was still felt to be so vital that it was often self-inflicted in order to secure a deeper joy. So is it always in ages of ardent faith; comfort and luxury and this present life, with all that they rightly contain of happiness, are cast aside as almost worthless in exchange for a spiritual exaltation.

But it will be said that this violent enthusiasm and contempt for mere individual temporal well-being is not Christian alone,—that it is common to all religions. Granted. I will not contend that Christ was the only channel of this influence, though he has been the channel for most of us; nor do Buddhism, Brahminism, Mohammedanism, Confucianism, exhaust the category of religions more or less efficient in this particular. In islands of strange worship, amid savages of unclean life, the same enthusiasm for the spiritual as dominating the material is felt; for it is a part of the truth of God, and is limited to no age or creed. And in countries which by superficial outsiders are said to have no religious faith, it is to be found. The Japanese soldier throws away his individual life by the thousand, in order that his nation may take a noble place in the world and begin its destined work of civilising Asia; yet when he is dead what is Asia or his country to him? He *must* be dominated by a living faith, in perhaps he knows not what. He may not be able to express it, but his faith may be

none the less efficient for lacking the outward precision of an Athanasian formula.

But whatever be the case with other religions, the sacrifice of Christ has convinced the Western world of sin to a unique degree, of its reality and dire consequence, of its unreasonableness, its aspect as a disease which must be cured—with the knife if need be, but cured; we have learnt that it is foreign to the universe, it is not the will of God, it is not due to his caprice, or amusement, or dictation, or predestination, or pagan example; it is something which gives even Him pain and suffering; it is something to be rid of; and there is no peace or joy to be had until unity of will is secured and past rebellions are forgiven. The sin of the creature involves suffering in the Creator: the whole of existence is so bound together that disease in one part means pain throughout. This is the element of truth in the vicariousness of suffering, and in extension of suffering to the Highest; but it is not vicariously penal, nor is it propitiatory.

The orthodox doctrine of the Atonement implicitly maintains that God cannot forgive sin, unless and until He has exacted an adequate penalty somewhere. This does embody a kind of truth; for an eddy of conduct, good or ill, can only disappear by expending its energy in producing some definite effect. In one sense, therefore, a penalty must follow every inharmonious action: a penalty not falling on the wrong-doer

alone, but involving the innocent likewise, and bringing needless pain into existence. Does not a mother suffer cruelly for the guilt of her son? And yet is she not full of forgiveness? Perception of this may be part of the punishment, for there can hardly be a fiercer feeling than remorse. But the sting will not be fully felt by the wrong-doer till his spirit has become broken and contrite, and open to the healing influences of forgiveness: there is no agony like that of returning animation. Forgiveness removes no penalty: it may even increase pain, though only that of a regenerative kind; it leaves material consequences unaltered, but it achieves spiritual reform.

Divine forgiveness is undoubtedly mysterious, but it must be real, for we are conscious that we can forgive each other. It should be an axiom that whatever man can do, God *à fortiori* can do also; meaning by "man" not merely any poor individual man, but the whole highest ethos of the race, as displayed by saints, apostles, prophets,—and by Christ himself. How are we taught to ask for forgiveness of sins? *As* we forgive others. This does not solely mean *because* we forgive others, nor in so far as, nor on condition that, we forgive our fellows, but it has an additional significance,—it may be understood as meaning *after the same fashion* as we forgive or should forgive them. And the reason given is a luminous one; it has nothing

to do with propitiation, it makes no reference to sacrifice or vicarious penalty, nor to the merits of any mediator; no, the reason given is a noble and sufficient one, and it is simply this: "For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever." What more can we add but the word "Amen"?

CHAPTER XII

THE MATERIAL ELEMENT IN CHRISTIANITY

MEN of science who make a life-study of the material world alone, and habitually close their minds to the influences of poetry, and of emotional and religious and even philosophical literature generally, are apt to grow into the belief that the material aspect of the universe is the only aspect which matters,—sometimes going so far as to hold that it is the only aspect which is truly real.

Theologians and mystics, and even men of letters, are liable to err in a similar though complementary manner, and by exclusive attention to one region of human nature become so imbued with its supreme importance that they ignore and despise the universe of matter, force, and energy; regarding with complacency, not only their own ignorance, but the ignorance also of teachers of youth.

This distinction, between schools of thought on the intellectual plane, is fairly obvious; and a similar distinction holds also in the religious sphere.

There are those, on the one hand, who hold

that "God" and "spiritual beings" and "guidance" and "intelligent control" are words of only superstitious meaning,—that the world, as revealed by our senses, is the sole reality, our bodily life our true and only existence, and the world of poetry and religion but a dream.

There are those, on the other hand, who so immerse themselves in spiritual contemplation that the things of sense shrink into nothingness; and our present life, with all that pertains to bodily and terrestrial activity, becomes insignificant, or even acquires a negative value; since material things are to them a snare and a temptation, tending to divert their feet from the true path, and apt to fill their souls with clogging and vicious trifles.

The one extreme has been called roughly materialism, or naturalism, or secularism, or positivism; its religion is a practical religion of human nature and earthly service, its god a glorified humanity, and its immortality merely racial, being one of sentiment and memory.

The other extreme has been called spiritualism,[1] or mysticism, or asceticism, or puritanism,—for it has many phases; its religion is largely occupied with worship, sometimes in the form of contemplative awe and ecstasy, sometimes of labour for the glory of God; its God is a high and holy Personality of illimitable perfection, far removed from the struggles and trials of this mortal life,—

[1] Using this term in its philosophical sense.

which is a mere episode or probationary discipline before men's souls are lapped for ever in the peace of the Eternal, or are tortured by exclusion from His presence for all Eternity.

Between these extremes comes the religion which we know as Christianity. Looked at cosmically, this aims at being a comprehensive and inclusive scheme, capable of embracing the essential elements of both the other systems,—recognising and worshipping God in the Highest, loving and serving man even at his lowest; accepting the facts of nature and despising nothing that exists; desiring to utilise the opportunities of this present life to the uttermost, and yet believing that while possibly not the beginning, it is certainly not the end, of our existence; rejoicing in the objects of sense, but also realising beauty and truth in things perceived only through studious contemplation; rejecting the idea of any ultimate conflict between matter and spirit, and, when they appear to conflict, giving supremacy to the spiritual.

It is the mission of the Priest to emphasise one of these aspects; it is the business of the Naturalist to emphasise the other; it is the desire of the Philosopher to realise the element of truth in both departments, to grasp truth in its breadth and comprehensiveness; while it is the duty of the Religious man to apply the truths, so recognised, in the conduct of practical life.

But the task of the unifier is not an easy one; it is not to be supposed that every exuberant

utterance of the mystic is true, that every balanced limitation of the naturalist is true, and that it only remains to understand and accept both. His task is much harder than that: he has to exercise discrimination, to scrutinise and weigh carefully,—without letting himself be over-persuaded by the enthusiasts on either side,—and so gradually to evolve for himself a system of thought which is as true and helpful as may be possible to a being in his present state of development. This is the task which lies before us all; this is the task upon which the great prophets of humanity, each in his day and generation, have been engaged. This work absorbs the attention of many leading Christian theologians at the present time—men who exhibit welcome breadth of knowledge and are imbued with scientific method.

I. The Correspondence of Spiritual and Material

First of all, then, the whole doctrine of "Incarnation" recognises, and illustrates in developed form, an interaction between the spiritual and the material aspects of Reality. For as man has at least a dual nature—the material organism and the dominant mind—so, it was felt, must God be thought of as interacting directly with this material scheme; and must be supposed capable of incarnation in a material body, subject to growth, disintegration, and death,

like our own. An extraordinary and bold conception, manifestly symbolic or pictorial of something,—not literal nor reducible to any simple formula,—it nevertheless involves a great truth, the relationship between spirit and matter. Any divine revelation, to be accessible to us, must have an accessible and bodily form. So must a ghost or vision; however objectively unreal it may be, it must appear in the likeness of man, and will usually have garments such as we have been accustomed to associate with human beings: it must appear in material accessories, or it could not appear at all. That is the essence of revelation. And even in the most sublimated case, even if no outward form or voice were subjectively constructed, yet something in the brain must be affected; else not only could there be neither speech nor language, there could not be any definite impression, not even the vanishing impression of a dream.

But the materialising tendency of the human race has gone farther than that. Given the incarnation of a divine spirit in a mortal frame, they have not been content with that already sufficiently difficult idea; they have pressed further to ask how that body was produced, and what ultimately became of it. And so we have legends of abnormal birth and of bodily resurrection.

But the latter difficulty is not a problem raised by the phenomena associated with Christ alone;

it is a difficulty which has troubled all humanity. We are all supposed to be spirits endowed with immortality, as taught the ancients; but we all have bodies—the apparently necessary medium of manifestation and of individuality. — What becomes of them? Socrates was content to suppose that the body remained behind, sloughed off, and was restored to the elements of this material world. But the early Christians were not satisfied thus to get rid of their material part: a vein of materialism ran through their Christianity; they supposed that fleshly bodies were only temporarily discarded, and would ultimately rise and rejoin their divorced spirits at the sound of some future signal:—a grotesque idea which, strange to say, still survives in the thoughts of unimaginative persons, and in some portions of the liturgy.

But, it is contended, this is an essential part of Christianity, however it be interpreted; the mere persistence of existence was a pagan idea and existed long before Christ. The special feature of Christian belief in future life is not the survival or persistence of existence, even of individual existence, but the resurrection of the body; and hence this doctrine is quite naturally emphasised in the creeds.

Moreover, the very basis of Christianity—the Incarnation—emphasises and dignifies the perception that man consists essentially of both soul and body, and that he is to be aided and raised

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and saved, not by spiritual influences alone, but by agencies appealing to his senses and acting primarily upon his bodily organism.

It is the neglect of this truth which has often hampered the evangelising activity of religious bodies. They have tried to save souls alone. They are growing wiser now, and are beginning to realise that once bodily conditions are set fairly right, people's souls will prove to be much better than had been credited. There is a lot of innate goodness in humanity,—and to enable it to blossom and flourish it needs little more than material care —the same sort of care as is freely lavished upon a garden. Plants themselves do all the flowering and fruiting,—if only the gardener exposes them to sun and air, and keeps them clear of parasites and weeds. Let this only be done for humanity —and it will flourish exceedingly; it will repay the culture a hundredfold. Christianity, to be effective, must aim at saving the body as well as the soul.

But this kind of Christian Socialism, or whatever it may be called, is the practical outcome of a very different kind of materialism from the crude old form which perhaps partly took its rise in an over-literal interpretation of symbolic Art; and we must return to the inquiry,—what is to be the modern interpretation of all that singularly developed mass of mediæval doctrine, and how far is it to be accepted as in any sense corresponding to reality? For that a doctrine of

persistence or resurrection of body is not to be accepted in a crude form, such as that in which it is still sometimes preached by ignorant persons to-day, was obvious to the New Testament writers, as doubtless to the most enlightened saints of all time; and yet that it contains some elements of truth enshrined in its strange formalism, is to be strongly maintained.

The purely spiritual side of religion, so far as it contents itself with positive assertion and is not occupied with denying material facts, does not now concern us. It is the material side which I wish to consider, especially whether religion should have a materialistic basis, and how far its excursion into materialism may be warranted by experience. It is plain that for our present mode of apprehending the universe a material vehicle is essential; that which has no contact with the world of matter cannot be directly apprehended, and has for us no effective existence. A purely spiritual agency may be active,—and the activity may be guessed at or inferred, and may be believed in,—but the only evidence of its existence that can be adduced is the manifestation of that activity through matter; and the only moments when a glimpse can be caught of its activity are the moments at which action on matter occurs.

Dreams, visions, thoughts, inspirations,—all things known to us, no matter how intangible and subtle their essence—are enabled to enter what we call our present consciousness solely by

some action on, or action in, the brain. They may act on other material particles too, but on the matter of the brain they *must* act, or they give no sign.

A whole world may exist beyond our senses, may exist even in space and close to us, for all we can tell, and yet if it has no connecting links with the material world, it must remain outside our consciousness; and this isolation must last until we grow a new sense, or otherwise develop fresh faculties, so that intercommunication and interaction can begin. Whether there is any interaction at present between this and a supersensual world is a question that may be debated; but the above assertion, that some such interaction is an essential preliminary to our recognition of such a world, is hardly susceptible of debate.

Now, this dependence of the spiritual on a vehicle for manifestation is not likely to be a purely temporary condition: it is probably a sign, or sample, of something which has an eternal significance,—a presentation of some permanent truth.

That is certainly the working hypothesis which, until negatived, we ought to make. Our senses limit us, but do not deceive us: so far as they go, they tell us the truth. I wish to proceed on that hypothesis. To suppose that our experience of the necessary and fundamental connection between the two things—the something which we

know as mind, and the something which is now represented by matter—has no counterpart or enlargement in the actual scheme of the universe, as it really exists, is needlessly to postulate confusion and instrumental deception.

Philosophers have been so impressed with this that they have conjectured that mind and matter are but aspects, or modes of perception, of one fundamental comprehensive unity; a unity which is neither exactly mind nor exactly matter as we conceive them, but is something fundamental and underlying both,—as the ether is now thought of as sustaining, and in some sense constituting, all the phenomena of the visible universe.

This monistic view, if true at all, is likely to be permanently true; and, though it by no means follows that mind is itself dependent on matter as we know it, it will probably be still by means of something akin to matter—something which can act as a vehicle and represent it in the same sort of way that matter represents it now—that it will hereafter be manifested.

This probability, or possibility, may be regarded as the substantial basis of an orthodox Christian doctrine. For as we have already said, in Chapter VIII., Christianity emphasises the material aspect of religion, and clearly supplements the mere survival of a discarnate spirit, a homeless wanderer or melancholy ghost, with the warm and comfortable clothing of something that may legitimately be spoken of as a "body"; that is to say, it postu-

lates a normally invisible and intangible vehicle, or mode of manifestation, fitted to subserve the needs of future existence, as our present bodies subserve the needs of terrestrial life—an ethereal or other entity constituting the persistent "other aspect," and fulfilling some of the functions which atoms of terrestrial matter are employed to fulfil now.

Not only the authority of St. Paul, but the utterances also of poets, can be appealed to as bearing witness to some truth in the crude idea above formulated. To them the highest feelings have, and appear necessarily to have, a material outcome or counterpart associated with them. Take "love," for instance: many have been the attempts to spiritualise it into a bodiless entity; and doubtless in its highest form it is the purest and least gross of all the emotions; yet it must ultimately be recognised that it has a sacramental or material side, wherein the flesh and the spirit are inseparably united, and where neither can be discarded without loss to the other. It has been always easy to deride and condemn the bodily side of our nature; but by the truest seers this has not been done. The glorification and transfiguration, not the reprobation, of the body has been the theme of prophets and poets of profoundest insight; and those who in "matter" detect nothing but evil are essential, though plausible, blasphemers.

It has been easy, and more common, to tilt the

balance the other way, and, by discarding or ignoring the spiritual side, to wallow and blaspheme in a far more degraded and degrading manner. This tendency in times of decadence has been dominant,—nations and individuals have had to struggle with the overweight of their animal ancestry, and some have succumbed; but, shorn of its exaggeration, there is a truth to be perceived on the material side too, and we must be careful that in spurning the exaggeration we do not lose some of the essential truth embodied in it. In so far as the mis-called "fleshly school of poetry," for instance, is not fleshly in any low sense, but inspired,—the permanence and importance and dignity of the side now known as material is the truth which is being preached.[1] It may happen that in some cases the message is too dazzling for the messenger, and he may succumb to the enchantment of his vision, so that he lose the jewel itself and be left blindly grasping only its empty setting; but the message itself must not be unduly discredited on that account.

II. Resurrection

Our argument throughout has been that, since our identity and personality in no way depend

[1] I regret to have to refer, even for the sake of illustration, to this discredited and noxious criticism of the poetry of Rossetti; but I hope that the lofty character of the thing criticised is sufficiently manifest to enable every reader to perceive the beauty of the message and the inspiration of the poet.

upon identity of material particles, and since our present body has been "composed" by our characteristic element or soul, it is legitimate to suppose that some other "body" can equally well be hereafter composed by the same agency; in other words, that the spirit will retain the power of constructing for itself a suitable vehicle of manifestation, which is the essential meaning of the term "body." Accordingly when at death the controlling entity leaves the terrestrial sphere, and enters on a discarnate existence, it need not be thought of as continuing in a wholly disembodied condition: though it may be that its powers of communication will then be limited to intercourse with *friends*, *i.e.* persons with whom it is in sympathy. Present human bodies bring us into contact with strangers, and make us aware of people in whom perchance we take no interest. Hereafter our acquaintanceship may be perhaps limited to those with whom we are linked by ties of affinity and affection—the mode of communication being probably of a more sympathetic or telepathic character, and less physical, than now. If so, this planetary episode is a great opportunity for enlarging our sympathies, and for making friends; so that the emphasis laid by great prophets on "love," and their condemnation of selfishness as a deadly vice specially destructive of fulness of personality and wealth of existence, becomes amply intelligible.

The question whether individuality and per-

sonal identity and consciousness and memory, and all that constitutes an ego, are preserved, is worthy of examination and research, and has been dealt with in Chapter IX.; but, whatever the conclusion arrived at, the fate of the terrestrial residue can hardly be of any great consequence—except in so far as it incommodes survivors.

To those who stigmatise any distinction between soul and body as dualism, and say that it is contrary to the ultimate identity of matter and spirit, I reply No. Monism does not assert that atoms of matter are any aspect of *me*. The penholder is an instrument subservient to my will, and it may be made to express my thought, but it is no part of me; I can throw it down when done with, and when worn out I can burn or bury it, but I do not thereby lose the power of taking another, nor of learning to write with a different instrument and in another language if I travel to other countries. There may be a sense in which all matter is evidence of, and an aspect of, the thought of some World-Mind; but most of it is certainly neither evidence nor aspect of *my* mind. Matter divorced from all Mind whatever may possibly thereby cease to exist; but the furniture certainly does not cease to exist when I leave the room,—nor would it be affected if all humanity were to perish off the planet.

Those who press monism to these absurd lengths find a difficulty in preserving the

clearness of their thoughts; and in self-defence they take refuge in a narrow and illiterate and most unscientific variety of dogmatic scepticism, or agnostic dogmatism.

SOUL AND BODY

The above indication of a truth underlying the idea usually spoken of as bodily resurrection is not the popular version, but it is consistent with the highest Christian teaching. The crude popular and discredited version is not consistent with anything, and should no longer be perpetuated merely by an ancient phrase. The phrase "resurrection of the body" undoubtedly dates back to a period when it was thought that the residue laid in the grave would at some future signal be collected and resuscitated and raised in the air: and superstitions about missing fragments and about the permissibility of cremation, even to this day, are not extinct. But all this is clearly infantile, and has long been discarded by leaders of thought; and it were good if the phrases responsible for the misunderstanding could be amended also.

"Resurrection of *a* body" would be but little improvement; for the body that hereafter "shall be" is not that body which was planted in the ground; and the future "body" can hardly be said to have risen from the grave. Nor does the Nicene version "resurrection of the dead" give much assistance,—for that which survives is just

that which never was dead; it did not cease to be, and then arise to new life; its existence, if persistent at all, is necessarily continuous. The whole argument for persistence of existence depends on continuity,—on the fact that real existence does not suddenly spring into being out of nothing, and then suddenly vanish as if it had not been.

Perhaps the word "resurrection" may be interpreted as meaning *revival*, or *survival*; and "death" can be defined as a separation between the psychical and physical aspects of an individual, and as a definite physico-chemical process occurring to the body or material vehicle of manifestation. So far as the undying essence or spirit is concerned, the teaching of Socrates holds to this day: "Let them bury him if they could catch him: but he himself would be out of their reach."

It is all very well to stigmatise this as pagan teaching, and to hold it in light esteem,—it is teaching to which multitudes to-day have not risen; and a real and vital belief in such a doctrine could not but have a beneficent influence on conduct. It may be true to say that Christianity assumes all that, and supplements it with the Pauline doctrine of a resurrection-body, or spiritual body.—It does; but it is likewise true that the phrases of the Church do not assist people to grasp even the truth underlying the Socratic doctrine of immortality; and so, when

they perceive the falsity of corporeal resurrection, they are apt to lose faith even in persistence of existence. Having been accustomed to associate personality with a buried corpse,—the manifest decay and dissipation of the body destroys, in the semi-educated, the whole idea of immortality; and with it is apt to go religion too. "Resurrection" is itself a misleading word: the phrases which suggest that the person himself is entombed,—the phrases about waiting till the last day, and about the general resurrection, even the habit of burying with the face to the east, and the custom of burying relatives together,—are all misleading or liable to misinterpretation. Some of these customs are legitimate and humanly intelligible; and so strong a hold have these ideas on mankind, that even the greatest poets, who have shaken themselves loose from the thought, cannot, and possibly do not wish to, shake themselves loose from the time-honoured language in which it was embedded, for even Tennyson says:

"in the vast Cathedral leave him."

But God forbid that I should presume to pragmatise or dogmatise as to the language which ought to be employed. Only let us get our thoughts clear, and the language of devotion and of poetry may continue to be employed in due season. Words and ancient phrases can touch the emotions, as music can, without being too closely scrutinised by the intellect; the

formulæ of centuries must be respected, and a priggish precision of expression may be quite unsuited to worship.

III. The Resurrection of Christ

Let us then, in a spirit of orthodoxy, now approach the person of Christ—the Christ long recognised by Christendom as a Divine Person in human form: let us assume that in order to display himself to the inhabitants of this planet he was provided with a body like our own,—eating and drinking and sleeping and suffering and dying, like any of us: what should we expect to happen to his body—the body of Jesus of Nazareth—when it was done with?

That he should survive death, that he should be able to appear to worshippers, that he would exert a perennially vivifying influence on his disciples of all time—all this is orthodox, and all this is not repugnant to science as I conceive it. Is anything more necessary? That a historical legend should have grown up concerning the disappearance of the body from a tomb is almost inevitable, considering the state of belief at the time. If an apparition of someone recently deceased appeared now to ignorant people, I imagine that most of them would expect the corpse to have been utilised for the purpose, and to have been either temporarily or permanently disturbed in its grave. And to disprove a continued existence it might be held sufficient,

among ignorant people, to point triumphantly to a tomb not empty.

But then—it has been urged—Christ by ecclesiastical hypothesis was unique: he was not as one of us; his appearance was likely to transcend ours, and his body was likely to be differently constituted from ours.

I think it may be argued that, thus conceived, the Incarnation would hardly sustain the complete and efficient character which orthodox creeds claim for it. The whole idea of the Manhood is that he was a man like ourselves, subject to human needs, open even to temptation, obedient to pain and death. That his spirit was superior to ours, few deny; but that his body was essentially different, I confess seems to me like superstition. His raiment at any rate was made in the ordinary way, yet it too shared in the glory of the transfiguration. The Transfiguration was a splendid episode, typifying the dignifying and dominating of matter by the indwelling spirit. The shining in the eye of genius, the almost visible glow pervading the body in moments of exaltation—this, raised to a higher power—permeated and suffused the poor human body and travel-worn peasant garments of Christ, till the few privileged witnesses had to shade their eyes.

So it is reported concerning Moses after his solitary communion with Jehovah; so it may have been with Joan of Arc; so it may be again, from time to time, with the most exalted saints.

These things are legends, it is true, but they are more than legends; they bear on their face the signs of hyperphysical truth—not in detail of narration, perhaps, but in essence. So it was with Saul's vision at Damascus; so it may have been with the scene at the Baptism; so, it is not inconceivable, may there be some foundation of truth even for the legendary appearances to Magi and to shepherds at the Nativity.

The mental and the physical are so interwoven, the possibilities of clairvoyance are so unexplored, that I do not feel constrained to abandon the traditional idea that the coming or the going of a great personality may be heralded and accompanied by strange occurrences in the region of physical force. The mind of man is competent to enchain and enthral the forces of nature, and to produce strange and weird effects that would not otherwise have occurred. Shall the power be limited to his conscious intelligence? May it not also be within the power of the subconscious intelligence, at moments of ecstasy, or at epochs of strong emotion or of transition?

That there should be storms and earthquakes at the Crucifixion is sure to be legendary, but that it was likewise true is not in the least inconceivable. We know too little to be able to dogmatise on such things: we must observe and generalise as we can.

Hence if the historical evidence is strong and

definite for the disappearance, not of bodies from tombs, but of that one Body from its tomb—the exception being justified on the ground of its having been inhabited by an exceptionally mighty Spirit—I am not one to seek to deny the possibility on scientific grounds. The possibility of phantasmal appearances is now well authenticated, and there is no need to discredit any of the testimony; but, admitting the correctness of the record, we are bound to say that, as regards any proof of *material* resurrection or resuscitation, the evidence adduced in the Gospels is not such as will bear scrutiny: it offers no case to the Society for Psychical Research. If the stone and the seal had been found intact, the watch on duty,—and yet the tomb empty,—there would have been something to investigate. But to find the place abandoned, and the stone rolled away, is equivalent to finding the grave rifled: no question of dematerialisation need arise.

But surely that is not what should be meant by Christian Resurrection: I submit that for the purposes of religion at the present day no exceptional treatment of the discarded human body is necessary; and the difficulties introduced by the effort to contemplate the circumstances of anything approaching physical resurrection, or re-employment of the same body, are very great. The record may be taken as exact, without any need for assuming identity of material particles in the Resurrection body. The Appearances during the Forty

Days are mysterious, but they can be accepted very much as they stand; for they agree with our experience of genuine psychical phenomena the world over; and a farewell phantasmal appearance — described as an Ascension — is credible enough. The presence of the wounds also is quite consistent with what is observable in apparitions as known to us: they by no means establish physical identity. The body notoriously had not its old properties, for it appeared and disappeared and penetrated walls; and ultimately this supposed assemblage of terrestrial particles ascended into another order of things, "and sat down for ever at the right hand of God." We are out of the region of physics here, and attention to the details of any material body in such an atmosphere introduces strangely inappropriate considerations. The very atoms of which it was composed would not last for ever, the chemical compounds would soon decay: surely we need not assert permanence of the body which was buried in the tomb, any more than we assert it of the four or five previous bodies which, during the Incarnation, had been worn and discarded, particle by particle.

Moreover, it is depressing to the ordinary Christian—who knows or ought to know that his own flesh, bones, and other appurtenances will assuredly not rise—to have to think of Christ's Resurrection as a unique occurrence; for the express Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection is

that it was the type or pattern of our resurrection. The more normally we can regard the human side of Christ, and everything connected with his body both before and after death, the better and more hopeful is it for us his brethren.

Surely it is true that the mystical spirit, which is the vital essence of any church or religious fellowship, though it may be incarnate for a time in a creed, should not be for ever fossilised therein, but should continually lie open to the fertilising influences of reason and expanding knowledge, and, like any other spirit, should dominate and survive its material body.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER XII

Lest it be thought that a wholesome and proper ingredient of materialism, as an element in Christianity, has been in this chapter attacked, let us try to summarise its main points in order to make plainer the balanced position intended. Its contentions are as follows:

1. That Christianity is an intermediate and unifying religion, between the extremes of spiritualism on the one hand and materialism on the other; and that the whole idea of a divine Incarnation, as well as many of the parables and the sacraments, can be regarded as expressive of this comprehensive character. John i. 14, vi. 51; Luke vii. 34.

2. That the correspondence or connexion between matter and spirit, as now known, is

probably a symbol or sample of something permanently true, so that a double aspect of every fundamental existence is likely always to continue; but that the supposed necessary and perpetual dependence of the human spirit on ordinary chemical terrestrial matter, for its manifestation and activity, is illusory and superstitious. 1 Cor. xv. 49, 50, ii. 14, iii. 1.

3. That not only persistence of existence but full retention of personality and individuality can be conceived, without the hypothesis of retention of any particles of terrestrial matter; since identity of person in no way depends upon identity of particles even now. 1 Cor. xv. 38.

4. That the real meaning of the term "body" should be explained and emphasised, as connoting anything which is able to manifest feelings, emotions, and thoughts, and at the same time to operate efficiently on its environment. The temporary character of the present human body should be freely admitted; although it usefully and truthfully displays the incarnate part of us during the brief episode of terrestrial life. Job xix. 26 (R.V. *margin*).

5. That through incarnation of the Christ Spirit certain aspects of Deity were revealed to humanity in a unique degree; but the more akin to ordinary humanity that incarnation can be considered, the more luminous is the teaching, and the better for the hold of Christianity upon the race. 1 Cor. xv. 16, 1 John iii. 2.

6. One of the lessons to be learned is the potentiality of the Divine latent in all humanity: and this is displayed in its freedom to rebel as well as in its power of filial service. John i. 12; Rom. viii. 14, 17.

7. That the spread of scepticism and dogmatic agnosticism is largely due to an attempted maintenance of incredible and materialistic dogmas by the orthodox: to the comparative neglect of the essential, the spiritual, and the practical. John vi. 63, iv. 24.

8. That materialism of an untransfigured and unglorified description is out of place in religion, but that the right kind of materialism is in place. For the mystical or sacramental use of earthy materials is helpful, though there always comes a point at which they cease to be expressive. An attempt to press them beyond their significant stage leads to impossible details, and becomes indistinguishable from fidgeting and worrying superstition, unworthy of an emancipated and Affiliated race. John xvi. 15; Mark iv. 30, 33; Gal. iv. 9.

9. That the salvation offered by Christianity is of the whole man—body and soul together; and that this fact is the supreme justification for energetic practical effort in rectifying social abuses, in improving social conditions, and securing to people generally a fair opportunity for a decent and honourable life. Matt. xxv. 14, 40; Rom. viii. 23.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DIVINE ELEMENT IN CHRISTIANITY

IV. Christianity and History

AS a physicist my desire is to go out as far as possible to meet theologians on their approach to the camp of physical science; for it is generally far more useful to discover points of possible agreement than to emphasise points of difference. To my comrades in science I would point out that the leading men among orthodox Christians now set us a good example, since they no longer seem to desire to interpose any insuperable protest against overhauling from time to time the material and historical assertions associated with Christianity, and discarding those which cannot be established as facts—discarding, that is to say, those which do not satisfy one at least of two criteria or conditions: that of being well evidenced historically, on the one hand; and that of satisfying or being felt essential to spiritual aspiration, either of an individual or of a church, on the other. If this understanding is correct, we may surely accept the criteria suggested, without further criticism; and accordingly the

foregoing pages have pleaded for the gradual reconsideration of certain traditional tenets, on the grounds:

(*a*) That they are not of a nature to be well evidenced historically. (To say more than that would imply that I regarded myself as a competent historical critic.)

(*b*) That they are not edifying to people at any reasonable intellectual level; while as to higher spiritual aspiration, it is independent of them.

We can now proceed to the more positive or constructive division of our subject.

It is reasonable to accept the life of Christ depicted in the Gospels, together with the general account given of his teachings, as a narrative substantially true. In so far as the record is not accurate—and even without any knowledge of Biblical criticism we must admit that it is bound to contain inaccuracies—we may be sure that the record falls short of reality, and that while the report of the teachings may have been spoiled and garbled in places it is not likely to have been improved. Some of these spoilings may have been due to misunderstanding; others to a desire for extra edification; and it is difficult to say which attitude of a transcriber is the more dangerous.

A similar view, however, may be held concerning the record of the words of any astounding genius; his contemporaries and immediate suc-

cessors are not likely to improve upon his teachings. Even as mere commentators they may exhibit well-intentioned stupidity; but, if they have to act also as reporters, omission eked out by exaggeration is sure to be prominent, and unconscious misrepresentation is bound to occur.

But now in the case of Christ we may surely go much farther; we may admit his inspiration in an extraordinary sense, and may accept the general consensus of Christendom as testifying to his essentially divine character. In other words, we must perceive that he has revealed to the inhabitants of this planet some of the salient features of Godhead to an altogether exceptional extent.

He displays, in fact, attributes which many persons understand and signify when they use the word "God": so much so, that they call him by the name of the Spirit which he reveals.[1] He does not display *all* the known attributes of God —not those studied in Natural Theology, for instance,—but he exhibits those which are most important to poor struggling humanity, and those which by their very simplicity and naturalness might otherwise have been overlooked by the human race, or stigmatised as too hopelessly anthropomorphic. The attributes of Fatherhood,

[1] The statement that the Christ depicted in the gospels is God, is a statement illustrative of our conception of Godhead, and not really an explanatory statement concerning Christ: we cannot define or explain the known in terms of the unknown.

for instance, strongly and simply realised, constitute one revelation; the effective combination, or even identification, of duty towards God with service of man, constitutes another; and there is, it seems to me, an even bolder conception of Deity suggested, in the dramatic parable "the child in the midst,"—of which I fancy we have but an abbreviated version.

The only place where I find it necessary to hesitate, and perhaps to remonstrate, is on the materialistic side of orthodox Christianity—the place where the ordinary phenomena of nature enter into the doctrines, and are more or less associated or incorporated with them. Here it is natural to plead for more elastic treatment; and here alone do I imagine that the modern mind can see farther and walk more securely than the mediæval mind. It is possible that in the light of accumulated knowledge we can in some respects see more clearly than even the saints and prophets of the past.

It has been the perennial glory of Christianity that it can adapt itself to all conditions of men, and to all changing periods of time; and it has done so always by modification of the non-essential. The spirit and essence have preserved their identity; the accidentals, in Judæa, in ancient Rome, in mediæval Germany, in modern England and America,—the accidentals have been different.

But throughout, it will be said, certain of the

material aspects have preserved their continuity and identity unchanged; and certain miracles, especially the physical details supposed to accompany, or by some even to constitute, the Incarnation and the Resurrection, have never been doubted by Christians. Until recently, such a statement could be truly made. But half a century ago they were seriously doubted, by people who thereby felt themselves outside the flock, but who in all practical details of life and conduct were as good as—well, were comparable with—orthodox Christians. The disbelief went, in my judgment, too far: it extended to some of the spiritual teachings—to those concerning prayer, for instance; and it threw needless doubt upon some phenomena, such as those referred to in previous chapters, which may after all have been facts. Whether it went too far or not, a tendency towards disbelief became prominent; being encouraged by the persistence of the faithful in certain material statements which to an age of more knowledge had become incredible. The extreme excursion of the pendulum has subsided now, but it is still swinging, and when it settles down it will not occupy precisely the same place as it did before the oscillation began. The swing was caused by a shifting of the fulcrum, or point of support, and only the bob has been visible. So it has become our duty to determine how much and in what direction the real pivot of the pendulum has

been effectively moved, and to realise that that governs the position which will be taken by the oscillating mass of opinion when present disturbances have subsided. Those, if there be any, who think that it can ever go back permanently to a pre-nineteenth-century position, or to a position determined by the first six or any other past centuries, are assuredly mistaken.

We shall now endeavour to arrive at a closer appreciation of what the essence of Christianity really is; first, however, recollecting what it has been considered to be by all sorts and conditions of men.

V. Varieties of Christianity

Christianity is a word of wide significance, and it is not easy to attach to it a definite meaning. It is clear that, as it exists among us, it has many phases, which may be grouped around five or six principal types,—not mutually exclusive.

1. First there is evangelical or spiritual Christianity, usually associated with the name of Paul; which seeks to emphasise a forensic scheme of salvation, and to link itself on to the Hebraistic and Hellenistic ideas of blood and vicarious sacrifice. Salvation by faith in the Atonement is the central feature of this scheme, and right conduct is a secondary though natural sequel to right belief and to trust in what by Divine mercy has been already fully achieved; so that no "performance" is necessary for

salvation, but only assimilation of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ, once and for ever accomplished.

This variety of Christianity aims at attending to the spiritual aspect only, and despises the material; it rejects the intervention of men and of material aids; it mistrusts the use of music and ornament; and it endeavours, sometimes with poor success, to contemn the beauty of this present world in comparison with the glory that shall be revealed. Even the sacraments it is inclined to minimise, and to regard them as memorial services helpful to the spirit, rather than as agencies of real and present efficacy achieving something otherwise unattainable. Definite historical fact is of supreme importance to this variety of belief; for if that be taken away the basis of faith is undermined, and the system totters to destruction.

2. Next there is ecclesiastical or dogmatic Christianity, usually associated with the name of Peter; which is apt to emphasise the value of ceremonies, to regard material actions and priestly offices as essential to salvation, and to insist not only on their symbolic interpretation, but on some actual physical transformation, some bodily or material efficacy. It builds upon an historic past, but also insists upon a present virtue residing in the Church, or accessible to and administered by the proper officers and dispensers of the means of grace. It feels the importance

of times and seasons, and buildings, and sensuous representation; it is apt to concentrate attention on ecclesiastical details,—with a zest for minutiæ, which, when compared with the vital issues at stake, strikes an outsider as rather pathetically humorous. And it sometimes so elaborates the material acts of worship, such as the sacraments, that they tend to take on the nature of incantation, and are occasionally performed by the priest alone: the congregation passively sharing in their mysterious and miraculous virtue.

3. Then there is the practical and energetic form of Christianity, usually associated with the name of James; which emphasises the virtue of good works and the importance of conduct, which regards belief and doctrine as of secondary importance, which seeks no cloistered virtue, but throws itself vigorously into social movement, and endeavours both by word and deed to serve the brethren, and by active charity to ameliorate the lot of those whom it thinks of as Christ's poor.

4. Yet another variety is the mystical or emotional form of Christianity, usually associated with the name of John; which seeks by rapt adoration and worship of the Redeemer, and love of all whom he has called his brethren—"even the least of these my brethren,"—to rise to the height of spiritual contemplation and ecstasy: tending somewhat, in this its high quest, to isolate itself from the world, in order to lose itself in an anticipation of heaven.

5. There exists also, one must admit, some trace of what may be called governing or hierarchical Christianity; which glorifies the priestly office, which seeks after temporal power, which regards the material prosperity of the Church as of more importance than the welfare of states and peoples, which joins hands with autocratic rulers for the oppression of the poor, which blesses and sustains violence, so it be used against the Church's enemies, which banishes and excommunicates the saints—even those of its own household,—and by corruption of the best succeeds in abetting the cause of the worst. This is the kind of Christianity which attracts the special notice of sceptics and scoffers; and most of the diatribes of good men against Christianity and the Christian ideal are based upon some confused apprehension of this ghastly and blasphemous travesty.

Whether it persists, here and there, in this country it is not for me to say, but it certainly has some existence in that country which must some day pass through the throes of an ultimately beneficent revolution—the country whose Church has excommunicated Tolstoi, and whose late Procurator of Holy Synod, in furtherance of what he conceived as legitimate ecclesiastical aggrandisement, exhorted the Czar to folly and wickedness in terms of fulsome and superstitious adulation.

6. A Protestant version or modification of the last variety was the persecuting, or as some

call it the Judaising, type; which sought to curb Christian freedom by bondage to Mosaic institutions. Extreme Sabbatarianism, tortures for witchcraft, and executions for heresy, represent some of the activities of this denomination,—now happily nearly extinct.

7. Lastly, and ostensibly the base of all these varieties—but how different from some of them,—there is the Christianity practically exemplified and taught by that Syrian Carpenter, during his three years of public service, before his execution as a criminal blasphemer. The name of that gentle and pathetic figure has been used by the greater part of the Western world ever since, sometimes to sanctify enterprises of pity and tenderness, sometimes to cloak miserable ambitions, sometimes as a mere garment of respectability.

Whatever view we may take of this Personality, we can most of us recognise it as the grandest that has yet existed on this planet. Hence, if it is through human nature that we can gradually grow to some dim conception of the majesty of the Eternal, it is the life and teachings of that greatest Prophet that we shall do well to study diligently, when we wish to disentangle and display some of the secrets of the spiritual universe; and, by the saints, his words have always been recognised as the highest yet spoken on earth concerning the relations between man and man, and between man and God. It is certain that only a few of his utterances are

contained in our extant records, and it is possible that some of them have been mutilated and spoiled in transmission; nevertheless it is of interest to take those recorded words and see how far they countenance the various schemes or types of Christianity which have been based upon them. And in particular I wish to select those which seem to strengthen the case for either a partly material or a purely spiritual interpretation of Christianity.

First, to clear away the blasphemous use of Christ's name in association with political or temporal or hierarchical Christianity, the following will suffice:

"My kingdom is not of this world."

"Woe unto you, generation of vipers, that stoneth the prophets," etc.

"Ye make the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition."

There are many emphatic statements that religion is peculiarly a spiritual affair:

In favour of a spiritual form of religion

"God is a spirit, and they that worship him must, etc. . . ."

"Neither in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem . . ."

"The words that I speak unto you they are spirit . . ."

"That born of flesh is flesh, of spirit is spirit."

"Ye make clean the outside of the cup."

"Pray in secret."

"Mint, anise, and cummin."

"The sabbath was made for man."

"Meat ye know not of."

"The kingdom of heaven is within you."

"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

"It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing."

"How is it that ye do not understand?"

On the other hand, there are several texts which appear to support material accessories:

In favour of a ceremonial and material form of religion

"This is my body."

Baptism. "Suffer it to be so now."

"This kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting."

Breaking of bread and giving thanks.

"Eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood."

"Spit and touched his tongue."

Anointing eyes.

Wedding garment (otherwise interpretable).

But the teachings which have an immediately practical bearing constitute the most numerous class:

In favour of a practical form of religion

Grapes and thistles.

Heal the broken-hearted, liberty to captives, etc.

"Inasmuch as ye did it . . ."

"Go and sell all that thou hast."

"Worketh hitherto, and I work."

"Well done, good and faithful . . ."

Do the will to know of the doctrine.

"If ye know . . . happy are ye if ye do."

"Blessed is that servant who is found so doing."

Fruitless tree cut down.

"I was an hungred."

"Gather them that do iniquity . . ."

Sower and seed.

Good Samaritan.

"Casting out devils in thy name."

"Heareth and doeth."

Tree known by fruit. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

"They that have done good to the resurrection of life," etc.

"Not every one that saith Lord, Lord."

Cup of cold water.

"He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my brother," etc.

"This do and thou shalt live."

"Son of man came . . . to minister."

"Occupy till I come."

In many statements the human side of the Messiah is specially emphasised :

Emphasising the human side of Christ

"The Son can do nothing of himself."
"I seek not my own will."
"I am come in my Father's name."
"He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory."
"He hath given me a commandment what I should say."
"Son of man."
"Why callest thou me good?"
"Ye both know me and know whence I am."
"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."
"My Father is greater than I."
"My Father and your Father, my God and your God."
"As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do."

(*Statements emphasising the Divine side are referred to later : page* 311.)

A few texts, so far as they are genuine, can be appealed to as supporting ecclesiastical Christianity :

In favour of an ecclesiastical form of Christianity

"Keys of the kingdom of heaven."
"Sitting on twelve thrones judging," etc.
"Bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."
"If he refuses to hear the church, let him be," etc.

But it must be remembered that the frequency of expressions which, though full of meaning, can hardly be taken literally, and were so strongly figurative that even his Eastern associates were misled, is notorious :

Figurative expressions

"Hateth father and mother."
"Renounceth not all that he hath."
"Prophet cannot perish out of Jerusalem."
"Let him sell his cloke and buy a sword."
"Not to give peace but a sword."
Camel through needle's eye.
"Sit on twelve thrones judging."
"Son coming in the clouds of heaven."
"This generation shall not pass away."
"I came not to judge the world."
"This is my body."
"Let the dead bury their dead."
"Come to me and drink."
"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."
"Remove mountains."
"Some standing here shall not taste of death."
"Keys of kingdom of heaven."
"Bread of life."
"Born again."
"Destroy temple."
"He that believeth is not judged."
"Eat my flesh and drink my blood."
"I am the door."
"Everlasting fire."

If we endeavour to draw from all these texts a general deduction concerning the kind of religion intended and taught by the Founder of Christianity, I cannot but feel that the balance inclines strongly in the double direction of a spiritual interpretation on the theoretical side, combined with a thoroughly practical and simple outcome in daily life. These elements, the spiritual and the practical—the worship of God as a Spirit, and the service of man as a brother—are undoubted and emphatic constituents—the warp and the woof, as it were—of the pure Christian faith. But it is difficult to maintain that they are uniquely characteristic of it: even when

taken together they can hardly be said to constitute a feature which sharply distinguishes it from all other religious creeds. For a still more fundamental substratum or framework—for a perception of the really characteristic and essential element in Christianity—we must look away from the detailed words and teachings, and must contemplate the Life as a whole.

VI. Ecce Deus

What, then, is the essential element in Christianity,—the essential theoretical element which inspires its teachings on the ethical side? In the inculcation of practical righteousness other noble religions must be admitted to share; but there must be an element which it possesses in excess, above others—some vital element which has enabled it to survive all the struggles for existence, and to dominate the most civilised peoples of the world.

A religion is necessarily compounded of many essences, and is sure to be mingled with foreign ingredients, some worthy, some unworthy; but these accessories cannot account for its vitality, for its adaptation to various ages, and for its acceptance by all conditions of men. A miraculous birth and resurrection were certainly not *distinctive* of Christianity; they have appeared in other religions too; we must look for some feature specially characteristic and quite fundamental.

I believe that the most essential element in Christianity is its conception of a human God ;— of a God, in the first place, not apart from the universe, not outside it and distinct from it, but immanent in it ; yet not immanent only, but actually incarnate, incarnate in it and revealed in the Incarnation.[1] The nature of God is displayed in part by everything, to those who have eyes to see, but is displayed most clearly and fully by the highest type of existence, the highest experience to which the process of evolution has so far opened our senses. By what else indeed can it conceivably be rendered manifest? Naturally the conception of Godhead is still only indistinct and partial ; but, so far as we are as yet able to grasp it, we must reach it through recognition of the extent and intricacy of the cosmos, and more particularly through the highest type and loftiest spiritual development of man himself. John i. 18.

The perception of a human God, or of a God in the form of humanity, is a perception which

[1] It may appear hardly fair to treat the doctrine of Incarnation as an intensification of the doctrine of Immanence ; inasmuch as some may consider them almost antithetic. Spinoza, for instance, held the one, but would assuredly have eschewed the other. But opponents no doubt realise that there is a tendency nowadays to strive rather towards a unification of the two doctrines. It may be admitted that emphasis on the philosophical notion of Immanence is comparatively recent on the part of theologians ; but it can hardly ever have been completely absent from the Christian atmosphere, since St. Paul in his Athenian address clearly lent it his countenance, and it is implicit in the doctrine of the *Logos*.

welds together Christianity and Pantheism and Paganism and Philosophy. It has been seized and travestied by Comtists; whose God is rather limited to the human aspect, instead of being only revealed through it. It has been preached by some Unitarians; though reverently denied by others and by Jews, who have felt that God could not be incarnate in man: "This be far from thee, Lord." It has been recognised and even exaggerated by Catholics, who have almost lost the humanity in the Divinity; though they tend to restore the balance by practical worship of the Mother and of canonical saints. But whatever its unconscious treatment by the sects may have been, this idea—the humanity of God or the Divinity of man—I conceive to be the truth which constituted the chief secret and inspiration of Jesus: "I and the Father are one." "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "The Son of Man," and equally "The Son of God." "Before Abraham was I AM." "I am in the Father and the Father in me." And though admittedly "My Father is greater than I," yet "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; and "he that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

The world has been slow to grasp the meaning of all this. The conception of Godhead formed by some devout philosophers and mystics has quite rightly been so immeasurably vast, though still utterly inadequate and immeasurably

beneath reality, that the notion of God revealed in human form—born, suffering, tormented, killed—has been utterly incredible. "A crucified prophet, yes; but a crucified God! I shudder at the blasphemy,"[1] yet that apparent blasphemy is the soul of Christianity. It calls upon us to recognise and worship a crucified, an executed, God.

The genuine Humanity of Christ is now manifest and clear enough, though that too has been in danger of being lost. There have been efforts to ignore it, and many to confuse it; attempts are still made to regard him as isolated and unique, rather than as the first-fruits of humanity, the first-born among many brethren.

Realisation of the genuine and straightforward humanity of Christ is obscured by a reverent misapprehension, akin in spirit to that which originated the Arian denial of his divinity. Both modes of thought shrank amazed from the suggestion that God can be really incarnate in, and manifested through, man: at any rate, not in normal man; such a thing only becomes permissible and credible if the Man is abnormal and unique—according to the orthodox view.

It is orthodox, therefore, to maintain that Christ's birth was miraculous and his death portentous; that he continued in existence otherwise than as we men continue; that his very body rose and ascended into heaven,—whatever

[1] Kingsley's *Hypatia.*

that collocation of words may mean. But I suggest that such an attempt at exceptional glorification of his body is a pious heresy—a heresy which misses the truth lying open to our eyes. His humanity is to be recognised as real and ordinary and thorough and complete: not in middle life alone, but at birth and at death and after death. Whatever happened to him may happen to any one of us, provided we attain the requisite altitude: an altitude which, whether within our individual reach or not, is assuredly within reach of humanity. That is what he urged again and again. "Be born again." "Be ye perfect." "Ye are the sons of God." "My Father and your Father, my God and your God."

The *un*uniqueness of the ordinary humanity of Christ is the first and patent truth, masked only by well-meaning and reverent superstition. But the second truth is greater than that: without it the first would be meaningless and useless. If man alone, what gain have we? The world is full of men. What the world wants is a God. Behold the God!

The Divinity of Jesus is the truth which now requires to be re-perceived, to be illumined afresh by new knowledge, to be cleansed and revivified by the wholesome flood of scepticism which has poured over it. It can be freed now from all trace of grovelling superstition, and can be recognised freely and enthusiastically: the Divinity of Jesus, and of all other noble and saintly souls, in so far

as they too have been inflamed by a spark of Deity—in so far as they too can be recognised as manifestations of the Divine. Nor is it even through man alone that the revelation comes, though through man and the highest man it comes chiefly; the revelation is implicit in all the processes of nature,—and explicit too, so far as human vision, in the person of its seers and poets and men of science, has been as yet sufficiently cleared and strengthened to perceive it.

For consider what is involved in the astounding idea of Evolution and Progress as applied to the whole universe. Either it is a fact or it is a dream. If it be a fact, what an illuminating fact it is! God is one; the universe is an aspect and a revelation of God. The universe is struggling upward to a perfection not yet attained. I see in the mighty process of evolution an eternal struggle towards more and more self-perception, and fuller and more all-embracing Existence—not only on the part of what is customarily spoken of as Creation—but, in so far as Nature is an aspect and revelation of God, and in so far as Time has any ultimate meaning or significance, we must dare to extend the thought of growth and progress and development even up to the height of all that we can realise of the Supernal Being. In some parts of the universe perhaps already the ideal conception has been attained; and the region of such attainment

—the full blaze of self-conscious Deity—is too bright for mortal eyes, is utterly beyond our highest thoughts; but in part the attainment is as yet very imperfect. In what we know as the material part, which is our present home, it is nascent, or only just beginning; and our own struggles and efforts and disappointments and aspirations — the felt groaning and travailing of Creation—these are evidence of the effort, indeed they themselves are part of the effort, towards fuller and completer and more conscious existence.[1] On this planet man is the highest outcome of the process so far, and is therefore the highest representation of Deity that here exists. Terribly imperfect as yet, because so recently evolved, he is nevertheless a being who has at length attained to consciousness and free-will, a being unable to be coerced by the whole force of the universe, against his will; a spark of the Divine Spirit, therefore, never more to be quenched. Open still to awful horrors, to agonies of remorse, but to floods of joy also, he persists, and his destiny is largely in his own hands; he may proceed up or down, he may advance towards a magnificent

[1] So, in Professor Gilbert Murray's version of "The Trojan women" of Euripides,—whose tragedies represent a parting of the ways between an old theology and a new,—the tortured Queen Hecuba turns from the gods that know but help not, to the majesty of her own immeasurable grief, and in a moment of exalted vision perceives that even through her sorrow life had somehow been enriched, and that though Troy was burning and the race of Priam extinct, they had attained immortality in ways undreamed of, and would add to the harmony of the eternal music.

ascendancy, or he may recede towards depths of infamy. He is not coerced: he is guided and influenced, but he is free to choose. The evil and the good are necessary correlatives; freedom to choose the one involves freedom to choose the other.

So it must have been elsewhere, amid the depths of cosmic space, myriads of times over in all the vistas of the past; and thus may have arisen legends of the evolution of what are popularly called angels, some ascendant in the struggle, others fallen by their own rebellion. Let it not be supposed that these instinctive legends are wholly baseless: they are a pictorial travesty doubtless, but they are not gratuitous inventions; it is doubtful if entirely baseless or purely gratuitous inventions would have any vitality, every living idea must surely be based upon something; these correspond to something innate in the ideas of humanity, because embedded in the structure of the universe of which that humanity is a part.

A question presses on the optimist for answer therefore: Are the rebellious and the sinful not also on the up grade? Ultimately and in the last resort will not they too put themselves in tune with the harmony of existence? Who is to say? Time is infinite, eternity is before us as well as behind us, and the end is not yet. There is no "ultimately" in the matter, for there is no end: there is room for ages of rebellion and

degradation and misery, as well as for an eternity of joy and hope and love. We can see that virtue and happiness must be on the winning side, while crime is a fruit of arrested development, or reversion to an ancestral type; we can perceive that vice contains suicidal elements, while every step in an upward direction increases the potential energy of the moral universe; yet clearly there is to be no compulsion; the door of hope is not closed, but it must of free-will be entered, and good and evil will be intermingled with us for many æons yet. The law of progress by struggle and effort is not soon to be abrogated and replaced by a Nirvana of passive contemplation. There is too much to do in this busy universe, and all must help. The universe is not a "being" but a "becoming"—an ancient but light-bringing doctrine when realised;—it is in change, in development, in movement, upward and downward, that activity consists. A stationary condition, or stagnation, would to us be simple non-existence; the element of progression, of change, of activity, must be as durable as the universe itself. Monotony, in the sense of absolute immobility, is unthinkable, unreal, and cannot anywhere exist.

Such ideas, the ideas of development and progress, extend even up to God Himself, according to the Christian conception. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "It is the Spirit that worketh in us." So we return

to the initial idea of this section: The Christian idea of God is not that of a being outside the universe, above its struggles and advances, looking on and taking no part in the process, *solely* exalted, beneficent, self-determined and complete; no, it is also that of a God who loves, who yearns, who suffers, who keenly laments the rebellious and misguided activity of the free agents brought into being by Himself as part of Himself, who enters into the storm and conflict, and is subject to conditions as the Soul of it all; conditions not artificial and transitory, but inherent in the process of producing free and conscious beings, and essential to the full self-development even of Deity.

It is a marvellous and bewildering thought, but whatever its value, and whether it be an ultimate revelation or not, it is the revelation of Christ. Whether it be considered blasphemous or not—and in his own day it was certainly considered blasphemous—this was the idea he grasped during those forty days of solitary communion, and never subsequently let go.

This is the truth which has been reverberating down the ages ever since; it has been the hidden inspiration of saint, apostle, prophet, martyr; and, in however dim and vague a form, has given hope and consolation to unlettered and poverty-stricken millions:—A God that could understand, that could suffer, that could sym-

pathise, that had felt the extremity of human anguish, the agony of bereavement, had submitted even to the brutal hopeless torture of the innocent, and had become acquainted with the pangs of death,—this has been the chief consolation of the Christian religion. This is the extraordinary conception of Godhead to which we have thus far risen. "This is my beloved Son." The Christian God is revealed as the incarnate spirit of humanity;—or rather the incarnate spirit of humanity is recognised as a real intrinsic part of God. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you":—surely one of the most inspired utterances ever moulded by the lips of man.

Infinitely patient the Universe has been while man has groped his way to this truth: so simple and consoling in one of its aspects, so inconceivable and incredible in another. Dimly and partially it has been seen by all the prophets, and doubtless by many of the pagan saints. Dimly and partially we see it now; but in the life-blood of Christianity this is the most vital element. It is not likely to be the attribute of any one religion alone, it may be the essence of truth in all terrestrial religions, but it is conspicuously Christian. It was boldly displayed when a child was placed in the midst and was regarded as a symbol of the Deity; but it was fore-shadowed even in the early conceptions of Olympus, whose gods and goddesses were affected with the passions of men; it is the root

fact underlying the superstitions of idolatry and all varieties of anthropomorphism. "Thou shalt have none other gods but me": and with dim eyes and dull ears and misunderstanding hearts men have sought to obey the commandment, seeking after God if haply they might find Him; while all the time their God was very nigh unto them, in their midst and of their fellowship, sympathising with their struggles, rejoicing in their successes, and evoking even in their own poor nature some dim and broken image of Himself.

OF THE
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GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

AND SUMMARY STATEMENT OF MECHANICAL LAWS

Motion is a characteristic property of matter,—of amount and direction to be examined and specified with reference to some standard. Every piece of matter is moving, at some speed or other, through space. In other words,—of all possible velocities that may be possessed by a body, absolute zero is no more to be expected than any other: and is therefore infinitely unlikely, unless some cause operates to produce absolute rest. In the case of matter, no such cause is known: balanced forces produce equilibrium, not rest. Equilibrium is zero acceleration: Rest is zero velocity. Nothing is known with a velocity of absolute zero; and it is impossible to define such a thing, except with reference to the Ether of space. But even assuming the Ether—as we reasonably may—to be a legitimate standard of absolute locomotive rest, yet, inasmuch as matter moves through it without friction, there is no known cause operating to reduce material bodies to the same condition.

Uniform motion, therefore, requires no special explanation. Changing motion—like vibration and orbital revolution—does require explanation, and the forces concerned can be pointed out; but it is the change of motion that has to be explained, not the motion itself. The molecular motion which constitutes heat is constantly changing in magnitude and direction; and at the absolute zero of temperature this kind of vibratory motion ceases. But steady motion of a body as a whole in one direction

belongs to a different category: it is only one of the body's properties—no more and no less inexplicable than any other. To ask why a planet or other mass is steadily moving, therefore, is like asking why it exists.

Motion and speed are direct perceptions, arrived at through our muscular sense. From them we primarily derive the ideas or inferences called space and time. The notion of *space* is gained from unresisted muscular exertion; and this, combined with the sense of rapidity—as, for instance, in running or walking—gives us the idea of *time*.

Force.—The idea of force is obtained by direct sensory perception, as the muscular exertion needed to overcome resistance or obstruction of any kind. Muscular action, or its equivalent, produces motion when free, force when resisted. The function of force, when unbalanced, is to change the motion of matter, either accelerating or retarding or deflecting a body to which it is applied. Such change is technically called acceleration, and it necessarily results whenever an unbalanced or resultant force acts upon a body. But even in this case the body must oppose an equal *reaction* to the force, as a condition of the action, and as a consequence of its acceleration. The experience of reaction is primarily responsible for our perception of *matter*.

Acceleration is the name technically given to any change of velocity, whether it be of magnitude or direction; in other words whether the change be of the nature of increase or decrease or mere curvature of path. Acceleration is the effect of a single or resultant force acting upon a particle of matter, and its value is the ratio of the strength of the force to the mass of matter moved. This is known as Newton's Second Law of Motion.

Equilibrium.—Balanced forces do not affect the motion of a body, and as regards motion may be considered equivalent to zero. In equilibrium there is no acceleration, and whatever motion the body may possess will continue unchanged; but there is not the least necessity

for it to be at rest. This is sometimes called Newton's First Law of Motion.

It is illustrated by any body steadily moving in a straight line ;—for instance a steadily moving canal barge, on which the forces of propulsion and resistance are equal and opposite, moves in accordance with the first law of motion.

Resistance may be of the nature of friction, or it may be an active pull back exerted by some other agent or by a tether. It is a retarding force acting on a body from outside, and actively opposes any propelling force. The resultant or effective moving force is obtained from these two by simple subtraction.

Reaction is not to be confused with resistance, and is not due to any external agent, though it has to be aroused thereby. It is a passive condition, and is a definite property of any piece of matter on which a single force is acting from outside. The resultant or effective propelling force acting on the body is the external propulsion minus the external resistance ; and this resultant force is equal to the reaction of the body itself, and could not be exerted save for the reaction. For instance, a piece of cotton or a feather reacts but little, and accordingly very little propelling force can be exerted upon such bodies. They are said to have inappreciable mass or inertia. But a ton-mass, or an anvil, however freely suspended, is not easy to move quickly, and reacts strongly to a blow. Reaction is measured by the product of the mass and the acceleration of the passive or moved body.

Inertia is the name given to the potential reaction of matter—the reaction ready to be roused into activity by force,—and is a measure or equivalent of its massiveness or *mass*. It is the most fundamental and inalienable property of a given quantity of matter, and depends on nothing external to itself. To measure the inertia of a body directly, a driving force must be applied to it, and the ratio taken of the force to the acceleration produced. So defined it is absolutely constant, and is independent of any changes

of state, whether physical or chemical, — melting, for instance, or evaporation, or dissolving, or burning.

This also may be regarded as a statement both of Newton's second law of motion and of the conservation of matter.

Weight is the force with which bodies are attracted by the earth, and is due to the universal gravitation between particles of matter. It is found to be accurately proportional to inertia or mass, and is used as a convenient practical measure of it. But the reason of the connexion between weight and inertia is at present unknown. Weight as commonly understood depends of course on the neighbourhood of the earth, but inertia or mass is quite independent of such external accidents.

Stress signifies a pair of equal opposite forces, which are therefore balanced or in equilibrium. It may be either a tension or a pressure, or a combination of them. When applied to, or existing in, a body, a stress leaves its motion quite unaltered, but may cause an internal strain; *e.g.* the pressure of nutcrackers, or the tension in a stretched elastic. Every single force applied to a body A, is one component of a stress existing in an intermediate body or substance M; and the other component of the stress must act on some other body B. This is sometimes stated as Newton's Third Law; namely, that Action and Reaction are always equal and opposite.

An immediate result of this law is the conservation of momentum: a less obvious result of the third law, when combined with denial of "action at a distance," is the conservation of Energy.

Action at a distance.—The two chief ways in which activity is transmitted across space are (*a*) by means of a material projectile—like a bullet, and (*b*) by means of a continuous medium—as suggested by a thread or rod.

The denial of action at a distance, in the physical sense, is an assertion that there must always be *some* medium of communication: that force must always be transmitted by real contact—*e.g.* between matter and ether,—not by empty space, however narrow the gap. No assertion is

intended concerning thought or will or unknown processes of psychical activity, nor concerning anything outside the physical realm.

Work is done whenever a body yields to a force acting on it, the work being measured by the product of the force and the distance yielded in the direction of the force.

A force which only guides or deflects or curves motion, without accelerating or retarding it, does no work. No *work* is required to retain a planet in a circular orbit, for instance; though immense *force* is needed.

Work is done always by one body upon another; and the result is a transfer of energy from one body to the other, in amount equivalent to the work.

For the purpose of this and other like statements the Ether must sometimes—strictly speaking, always—be included in the category of "body."

Energy is that which, when possessed by a body, enables it to do work during the act of parting with that energy to other bodies, which may thereby be propelled: *e.g.* a bent bow and an arrow. If a body is unable to part with its energy—either because it is isolated in space, like a flying meteor, or for any other reason—then it can do no work, in spite of its possessing a store of energy. Sometimes the energy of a body is latent or potential until a trigger or detent is pulled, which, by precipitating some catastrophe, enables a transfer to be effected, and so liberates the stored energy. Such, for instance, is the case of gunpowder: when exploded, its energy is transferred to bullet, to gun, and to atmosphere. So also little of the motion energy of a cannon ball is transferred till it strikes a target.

Conservation of Energy.—The energy expended by a body which does work is gained by the body upon which the work is done; so that energy is neither gained nor lost on the whole; it is constant in total quantity, and is simply transferred from one body to another without increase or decrease. Every such transfer involves "work" equivalent to the amount of energy transferred. When no work is done, the energy is simply retained by the body possess-

ing it, although it may be deflected by a guiding force and may travel from place to place.

This mere conveyance by a single body is not spoken of as "transfer." For instance, an unresisted projectile or a planet retains and conveys its energy,—not only its motion energy, but to some extent also every other kind it may possess; and so energy is conveyed from place to place—though never from body to body—without transfer and without work. Any continuous medium can also transmit energy in the form of pulses or waves. Matter transmits it at the speed of sound; Ether transmits it at the speed of light. There is, however, much more to be said about both these processes; for matter is not really continuous, and there is an alternation of energy in all wave motion.

Dissipation of Energy.—Energy which can readily be controlled and transferred from one body to another, in a planned or determined way, is called available or useful energy; because at each transfer desired work can be done.

Although its amount remains in every case unaltered, yet in many cases energy tends to become less available after successive transfers; some part of it being always liable to degenerate into the comparatively uncontrollable form of random molecular motion (called *heat*) which we can only deal with in the aggregate or on the average, and therefore cannot utilise in any direct or complete manner. This automatic and apparently inevitable process (due to friction, imperfect elasticity, cooling, etc. etc.), is called the degradation or dissipation of energy. There is a tendency in this direction in all inorganic or inanimate processes.

Mind or intelligence may, under certain conditions, circumvent this process. For instance, a steam engine enables the heat in a boiler to drive machinery, whereas without some such device the boiler would merely cool uselessly by imparting its heat to surrounding objects. The heat so uselessly transferred would not be diminished in quantity, but it would be degraded in temperature and so rendered practically and humanly useless. The engine

enables its transfer to other bodies to be guided along "useful" channels, *i.e.* in planned directions, with appropriate transformation into other forms of energy.

It is possible that living organisms may frequently be able to circumvent the general rule of dissipation of energy, which is not to be regarded as a universal and uncompromising law of nature, but as a statement concerning the activities of inanimate material agencies. It can be most accurately expressed in terms of "heat" and "temperature," and when properly stated is certainly true as far as it goes.

Momentum is the name given to motion considered quantitatively, with reference not to speed only but also to the amount of matter moving. It is the product of the moving mass into the speed of its motion.

It has therefore a definite direction, and may be reversed; whereas energy is always positive and has no direction. The energy of a body has magnitude only, and can only be increased or diminished; whereas a body's momentum can be changed in direction as well. A guiding force can effect this change of direction without doing any work, and therefore without expending any energy; but like every force it must be exerted by some other *body*, which will sustain the necessary reaction and will acquire the equal opposite momentum.

Conservation of Momentum.—Whenever momentum is generated in one direction in one body, an equal momentum is always generated in the opposite direction in some other body. In the case of a gun, this latter is called the recoil. The speed of the recoil is less as the mass is greater, but the product of mass and speed is quite definite, and is the same for gun and for bullet. When the recoiling mass is practically infinite—as, for instance, when it is the earth—the *velocity* of recoil is practically infinitesimal, and is usually considered zero and ignored: but as *momentum* it has a definite value, and must not be ignored.

A single force increases the momentum of a body A; but, inasmuch as every force is one component of a stress,

the other component must generate an equal opposite momentum in some other body B. For instance, when two balls impinge, the one loses the momentum which the other gains. A ship's screw propels the water backward with the same momentum as it propels the vessel forward.

The above simple form of statement assumes either direct impact and contact between two bodies only, or else that the medium of communication, whatever it may be, is stationary—is massless or stationary; in other words, that the inertia of the intermediate body or substance is either zero or infinite. In the case of gun and bullet, therefore, a slight correction must be made to the simplified statement of the preceding paragraph, because of the mass and mobility of the powder gases, by whose explosion the bullet is driven in one direction and the gun in the other; but to the general law, properly stated, with all bodies taken into account, there is no known exception.

The fact that on the whole the positive and negative momenta always balance, so that in one sense it may be said that no resultant momentum is ever generated, is sometimes called the law of the conservation of momentum. Another mode of stating it is to say that Internal forces have no effect on total momentum. For instance, the centre of a shell exploding in mid-air continues its orbit unchanged by the explosion.

A deflecting force exerted by a groove or guide changes the direction of momentum of a body, but the groove or guide is moved with equal momentum in the opposite direction, even though it be fixed so as to form part of the earth.

All this is only another mode of stating one of the aspects of Newton's Third Law.

Matter.—Our original notion of matter is an inference drawn from the sense of muscular action impeded; and the notion is then generalised. Matter is known to consist of extremely small units, called atoms or molecules, which are tangible and ordinarily perceptible only when assem-

bled in enormous numbers—millions of millions of millions being required for an easily visible speck. These molecules, when crystallised or rigidly cohering together, form solids; when cohering without rigidity they constitute liquids; and when flying about nearly free of each other, except during collision, they give rise to the form of matter called gas and vapour.

It is now considered that some atoms occasionally break up spontaneously, and it is possible that ultimately they may resolve themselves more or less completely into electrons: though this is not yet proven.

Conservation of Matter.—Atoms of matter were once believed to be indivisible; now, however, it is supposed that some of them at least can resolve themselves into other atoms, and these perhaps into electrons; but the ultimate units of which matter is composed—whatever those units are—are still assumed to be constant in number and indestructible. Likewise, by human means at present, they are uncreateable.

Electron is the name given to the indivisible minimum electric charge, or ultimate unit of Electricity. Its nature and structure are as yet unknown, but it is thought probable that it is a definite structure or singularity in the Ether. It is a centre of force of excessively minute size in itself, but with influence extending throughout space.

Electricity, or an electric charge, is a mode of manifestation of some modified or specialised portion of the Ether.

Magnetism is another such manifestation, being a necessary concomitant of Electricity in motion.

Heat is an irregular or unorganised motion—chiefly vibratory—of the molecules or atoms of matter.

Temperature corresponds to the intensity or violence of the irregular motion called heat.

Light is an electric tremor or quiver in the ether; which transmits it at a prodigious pace, till it is stopped by absorbent matter and converted into heat.

By entering and stimulating a special organ, the eye, light enables us to make inferences regarding the bodies

which have emitted or encountered it, and which we are therefore said to "see."

By the leaves of trees light is utilised so as to enable them to assimilate inorganic material and elaborate it into plant tissue.

Sound is a mechanical vibration, conveyed by matter at the same moderate pace as it transmits a thrust or a pull. It consists, in fact, of alternate compressions and rarefactions. The ear enables us to make inferences regarding the source of these pulses, which we are therefore said to "hear."

Ether is the universal continuous connecting medium, filling all space, and emphasising the unity of the entire cosmos by the simplicity and uniformity and universality of its properties. Electrons may be related to the rest of the ether somewhat after the same fashion as knots are related to the rest of a thread; and it appears likely that the various known kinds of atoms of matter may be a definite series of groupings of electrons,—as obedient to regular laws of motion as the planets and satellites are in a solar system.

The ether is all of it physical, or in that sense material; and it conveys the tremors we call light at a definite velocity; but it is not what we have learnt, through our senses, to appreciate as *matter*, nor is it identical with either electricity or magnetism, though it is the vehicle or *corpus* of all these agencies.

Matter may turn out to be locally modified or electrified ether, but it *is* modified, and is not ether pure and simple.

Gravitation.—The ether, unmodified and simple, is not subject to gravitation; though it is the vehicle of this influence, as also it is the vehicle of light. Electrons, however, it is probable, do gravitate to each other, with a uniform unchangeable intensity depending on distance apart and nothing else; though the fact is still uncertain and the reason of it unknown.

Material or Physical.—It is incorrect to say that Ether is Matter. For there is a clear distinction between the part

of the ether which is modified into electrons or atoms and the part which is not so affected; and it is often also convenient to discriminate between the adjectives "material" and "etherial."

Nevertheless ether is material in the sense of belonging to the material or physical aspect of the Universe, as distinguished from the mental or psychical aspect. It may have psychical functions to perform, but it does not itself belong to the psychical order of things. Its direct connections appear to be with the world of matter, not with the world of spirit.

The mode by which the two worlds interact—as they certainly do—is as yet completely unknown. We may be reasonably certain that, whatever may be the process, it is something which supplements, without contradicting, the laws of mechanics as herein specified.

INDEX

Abbreviated form of Service, 92
Aboriginal Australian, 202
Absolution, 111, 113, 116
Abuses, opposition to, 93
  reform of social, 151, 294
Accepted doctrines, truth in, 236
Accessible revelation, 274
Accessories, material, 274, 306
Accidentals and essentials, 298
Accidents and accessories, 195
Accumulation of wealth, 198
Accusation, self-, 98
Act of Parliament, and prayer-book, 133
Action, in brain, 278
  chemical, 291
  at a distance, 45
  importance of, 151, 306
  and reaction, 67
Activity, introspection and, 240
  mental, 187
Acts of Uniformity, 92, 107, 119, 120
Adam, 215
Adaptability of Christianity, 298
Adaptation to environment, 203
Advent, 227
  second, 152, *preface*
Æonic, 230
Affairs, mundane, 196
Agency, 32, 44, 45, 47, 65, 69, 76, 77, 149, 152
Agents, 42
  free, 318
Ages of faith, 266
Aggregates, destruction of, 176
  material, 171
Aggregations and groupings, 173
  temporary, 171
Agnosticism, 299
  dogmatic, 294
Agnostics, 76, 198
Agony of returning animation, 268
Aids to religion, 247
Aim and trigger-pulling, 68
  of life, 199
Alas for ye, 249
Amœbæ, 20, 40
America, England and, 186
  Judæa, Rome, Germany, 298
American prayer-book, 91
Anæsthesia by suggestion, 46
Analogue of cable, 186
  of factory, 32
  of fish, 75
  of insect, 203
  of pendulum, 299
  of ship, 198
Analogy, garden, 276
Ancestral past history, 204
Ancestry, 221
  of man, 17
Anchorage, 97
Ancient documents, 238
  formularies, 87
Angels, 152, 316
Anger, 245, 249, 252
  divine, 228, 246, 248, 251
Anglican, high, 118
  orders, 111
Angry with wicked, 244
Anima Mundi, 188
Animal, destruction of tree or, 169
  origin, 221
  torture of child or, 252
Animals, individuality of higher, 177
  lower, 168, 177
  meaningless to, 168
  terrestrial, 185
Animation, agony of returning, 268
Annihilation, 172, 184
  contraction and decay, 180
  death and immortality, 167
Antecedence and sequence, 171
Anthropological difference of type, 110

Anthropomorphism, 34, 297, 319
320
Ants, 49, 58
Ape and tiger, 35
Aphasia, 186
Apostles, 227, 238
Apostolic succession, 110–114
Apparitions, 287, 290
Aqueous vapour, 173
Araunah, 10
Argon, 170
Argument from telepathy, 187
Arguments concerning miracles, 60
Arianism, 312
Army, 141, 143, 147
Arrangement of particles, 164
Art and poetry, 63
Article IV., 255, 291
Articles, 90, 95, 96, 135
declaration to the, 134
incredible, 90
interpretation of, 135
Artificial boundaries, 137
selection, 38
Artisans of creation, 230
Artist's conception, 227
Ascension, the, 291, 312
Asceticism, 243, 266, 271
Asia, civilisation of, 266
Aspect of universe, material, 270, 299
Aspects of Deity, 232
Assistance, 79, 80
Athanasian Creed, 38, 90, 126, 231, 267
Atheism, 28
Atlantic, 35
cable, 186
Atmosphere, of crime, 151
earth's, 36
protecting, 51
Atmospheric screen, 49
Atoms, decay of, 291
Atonement, 214, 234, 239, 254, 258, 259, 260, 262, 263, 300
in hymns, 218
Attributes, divine, 16, 37, 297, 311
Auricular confession, 106
Australian aboriginal, 202
Authenticity of messages, 194
Authority, 125
Autocracy, 303
Automatism, 42, 190, 193, 195

Baal, 228
Bacchæ, 215, 216
Bacteria, 47
Baptism, 130
the, 289
origin of, 127
Baptismal regeneration, 112
symbolism, 127
Basis of fact, historical, 301
Beauty of earth, 78, 301
Beaver and bee, 39
Beethoven, 39
Beginning and end, 31
Behold the God! 309, 313
Belief, criteria of, 295
Beliefs, truth in popular, 231
Beloved Son, 319
Benedictus, 99
Beneficence, encouragement of, 93
Bereavement, God and, 319
Best men, ministry of, 144
Bible and science, 15
Biblical criticism, 296
Bigotry, 137
Biology, 224
Birth and death, 169, 172, 181, 197
of Christ, 313
Birth sin, 220
virgin, 59, 222, 223, 224, 225, 274, 312
Bishop of Southampton, 258
Southwark, 236, 238, 260
Blasphemy, 250, 281, 318
Blatant fool, 229
sinner, 253
Blindness, wilful, 250
Blood, 215, 218, 237
drinking of, 216
flesh and, 128, 216
and worship, 217
Blue sky, 173
Bodily ascension, 291, 312
Body, cells in, 252
construction of, 163, 164, 282
definition of, 293
destruction of, 165
discarded, 283
duration of, 163
ethereal, 160
glorification of, 280
growth and death of, 273
identity of, 161, 163
of Jesus of Nazareth, 288
mind and, 189
physical identity of, 291
rejoining of, 275
resurrection of, 160, 274, 277, 284, 286, 287, 290, 312

Body, salvation of, 276, 294
soul and, 156, 158, 163, 164, 165, 183, 191, 226, 273, 275, 276, 282, 283, 284
and soul, Christ's, 254
and soul, salvation of, 294
spirit and, 292
spiritual, 160, 279, 280, 285
terrestrial, 161
Bones, flesh and, 255, 291
Boomerang, 202
Boundaries, artificial, 137
of knowledge, 208
Bowels, 237
Brahminism, 266
Brain, effect on, 274, 278
life and, 68
limited, 199
link between physical and psychical, 68, 69, 185
and memory, 185
nerve, muscle, 68, 184, 188
thinking, 185
Breach of law, 44
Bread and wine, 128
Breakwaters, bridges, and buildings, 69
Breathing, closer than, 33
Brethren, love of the, 302
Bridges, breakwaters, and buildings, 69
Broadening of tests, 93
Brontë, Emily, 174
Brooding and lamentation, 241
Brotherhood, 145
Browning, 122, 147, 204, 206
Browning's "Saul," 209, 257
Bruised reed, 253
Buddhism, 266
Buildings, bridges, and breakwaters, 69
Bull of God, 216
Burden of sin, 261, 263
Burial customs, 284, 286
service, 275
Buried corpse, 286
Burnt offering, 215
Buttresses of religion, 54
By-products of evolution, 201, 204

Cabinet ministers, 144
Cable, Atlantic, analogue, 186
Caird, Professor Edward, 199
Calf, fatted, 260
Campbell, M'Leod, 263
Canker, social, 140
Canon law, Roman, 119
Cantate, 99
Caprice, 50, 58, 62, 64, 265
Care of plants, 276
Carlyle, 141, 175, 182
Carpenter, Syrian, 304
Cases, pathological, 199, 206, 207
Casket, jewel and, 281
Catechism, 112
Categories of miracle, 59
Cathedral, Gothic, 124
Catholic and Protestant, 113, 118
Catholicism, 311
Cause, and effect, 42
first, 31, 171
Cecilia de Noël, 233
Cells in body, 252
Ceremonies, forms and, 124
Mosaic, 258
value of, 301
Ceremony and sacraments, 306
Chance, evolution and, 39
Change, and development, 170
legislative, 92
of point of view, 299
universal, 317
Chaos, 63
Character, personal, 177
eternal, 171
immortality of, 178
Characteristic of Christianity, 309
Characters, larval, 203
Chemical action, 291
Chemistry, organic, 20
physics and, 166
Child, torture of, 252
and fly, 50
in the midst, 298, 319
prodigy, 73
Children, and crime, 151
on the stage, 79
Child's doll, 247
Choice, 316
Christ, birth and death of, 313
Christianity of, 304
Church of, 107
denunciation by, 144, 145
divinity of, 297, 311
and God, 256, 258, 297, 304, 310, 311, 318, 319
the historic, 296
humanity of, 291, 293, 307, 312, 313
humanity and divinity of, 239, 311
incarnation of, 293

Christ, inspiration of, 297
nature of, 254
parting prayer of, 108
resurrection of, 287, 290
revelation of, 223, 318
sacrifice of, 244
uniqueness of, 312
willingness of, 262
words of, 305
wrath of, 249
Christendom, unity of, 108
Christian doctrine of resurrection, 160, 275
faith, warp and woof of, 308
ideal, 132
legend, 213
miracles, 59, 289, 299
reality, 225
socialism, 145–152, 276, 294, 302
Christianity, adaptability of, 298
characteristic of, 309
of Christ, 304
conversion to, 146
ecclesiastical, 301, 307
essence of, 309, 319
evangelical, 215, 300
existence of, 61
hierarchical, 303
and history, 295
an intermediate religion, 272
Judaising, 304
material aspect of, 299
material and spiritual, 305
materialistic side of, 298
as mediator, 272
mystical, 302
and paganism, 311
persecuting, 304
practical, 302
primitive, 145
and science, 21, 23, 298
and tradition, 259
varieties of, 300
vital element in, 319
Christian's burden, 261
Christians, early, 275
Christ's body and soul, 254
denunciations, 251
sufferings, 264
Chrysalis, 203
Chrysostom, 99
Church, and cabinet ministry, 144
of Christ, 107
and dissent, 109, 114, 115, 118, 120, 136
Church, duty of, 141
early, 265
energies, 142
established, 145
Free, 141
going to, 85
Greek, 251, 303
influence of the, 149
militant, 147
national, 106, 118, 119, 120, 136, 137, 138, 141, 143
by people, distrust of, 145
Roman, 119
rules, 94
in Russia, 251, 303
service, 86
and state, 106, 107, 136, 137
virtue in, 301
wings of a national, 118
work of the, 149
worship, 147
Churches, Free, 106
message to the, 149
Churchman, Free, 118
Church's year, 91
City slums, 78
Civic improvement, petition for, 65
Civilisation of Asia, 266
Clairvoyance, 39, 41, 189
premonition and, 190
Clasp of hand, 209
Cleansing scepticism, 313
Clearness, truth and, 214
Clerical obligations, 119
privilege, 119
Clock, 157, 162
Closer than breathing, 33
Clothes, 161, 274, 288
Cloud and dew, 173
Cloud of witnesses, 45
Clough, A. H., 234
Cluster of rival orthodoxies, 108
Coercion, 316
Collective sinfulness, 144
Collisions *versus* steady motion, 76
Comfort, indifference to, 266
Commentators, stupidity of, 297
Common participation in loaf, 128
or unclean, 225
Communication, cutting off, 186
mechanism of, 187
Communion of saints, 48
service, 98, 129
Competition, 78
Completeness, mechanical, 67
Complexity of self, 199

Compulsion, no, 317
Comtists, 311
Conception, artist's, 227
of Godhead, 311
immaculate, 221
Conduct, 151, 302, 306
eddy of, 267
Conference, Wesleyan, 111
Confession, the, 88, 98
auricular, 106
of sin, 144
Confinement, solitary, 251
Confucianism, 266
Congress, pan-Anglican, 134, 149
Connecting mechanism, 184
Conscious portion of scheme, 234
Consciousness and memory, 183
Conservation of matter, 169, 329
of matter and energy, 172, 325
of momentum, 67, 327
of value, 178, 179, 182
Construction of body, 163, 164, 282
of organism, 166
Continental medical practice, 71
Continuity, 226
of existence, 285
Contraction, annihilation and decay, 180
Contrast between science and religion, 6
Contrition, 98, 244, 249
Control, 33, 44, 77
divine, 21
Erastian, 143
guidance and, 75
identity of, 196
of mechanism, 198
over weather, 8
Controlling entity, 164
mind, 69
Controversies, religious, 106, 142
Controversy, education, 84
Conversion to Christianity, 146
Convince of sin, 267
Co-operation, 234, 318
human, 252, 317
Copernicus, 37
Corporate sin, 98, 100, 145
Corpse, buried, 286
Corpuscles, white, 252
Cosmic space, 316
Cosmos, 63
history of, 30
self-contained, 18, 22, 28
Council decree, Lateran, 119
Cranmer, Archbishop, 133
Cravings hypnotically distasteful, 262
Creation, artisans of, 230
travailing of, 182, 315
Creative fiat, 31, 61
Creator, suffering of, 267
Creed, Athanasian, 90, 126, 231, 267
Nicene, 284
Creeds, 90, 275
deeds, not, 151
and revision, 214
withdrawal of, 238
Cremation, 284
Crime and greed, 43
atmosphere of, 151
Criteria of belief, 295
Criticism, 235
Biblical, 296
of doctrines, 295
Crookes, Sir Wm., 192
Cross, 218, 261
Crowd, dispersal of a, 173
Crucified God, 312
Crucifixion, 289
Crude ideas of immortality, 286
Crudity of statements, 214
Cultivation of garden, 241
Currents, ocean, 36
Curtain, 79
Curtius, Marcus, 58
Customs, burial, 284, 286
Cutting off communication, 186
Czar, 303

Damage to soul, 166
Damascus, vision at, 289
Damnation, 230, 250, 316
Darwin, 27, 37
Days, the forty, 150
Deacons, ordering of, 120
Dead formularies, loyalty to, 97
Death, 282, 285
birth and, 169, 172, 181, 197
of body, growth and, 273
of Christ, birth and, 313
and decay, 181
definition of, 285
formula for, 10
immortality, and annihilation, 167
of Jesus, suffering and, 219
and life, 159, 184, 200
sleep, 200
Decay of atoms, 291
contraction, annihilation and, 180

Decay, death and, 181
Declaration at ordination, 105
H.M., to the Articles, 134
Decree, Lateran Council, 119
Deeds not creeds, 151
Deep sea fish, 75
Defects in universe, 253
Definition of body, 293
of death, 285
of good and evil, 181
of guidance, 66
of immortality, 179
of personality, 177
of sin, 242, 261
of soul, 165
Degeneration, 135
Deity, aspects of, 232
revelation of, 293, 304, 314
veil over, 228
vision of, 123
Dematerialisation, 290
Demi-gods, 222
Denunciations of Christ, 144, 145, 251
Desk, reading, 100
Destiny, 28, 40, 44, 76
of man, 315
Destruction of aggregates, 176
of body, 165
of tree or animal, 169
Development, 179, 180, 318
expansion and, 181
human, 78
of individual, 197
and progress, 170, 317
stages of, 43, 50
of universe, 314
Devils, seven, 241
Dew, 170
cloud and, 173
drop on a leaf, 173
Difference, anthropological or ethnological, 110
unity amid, 109
Different religious types, 110, 111, 115, 118, 121, 139
Difficulties of intercommunication, 196
Difficulty of recognising greatest, 250
Digestion, 161
Dionysus, 216, 217
Diotima, 233
Dirt, 242
Disappearance of soul, 265
Disbelief, 299
Discarded body, 283
Discarnate intelligence, 194
spirit, 279
Discipline, probationary, 272
Discovery, revelation or, 226
Discrimination, task of, 273
Disease, 242
sin as, 267
soldiers and, 243
Diseases like weeds, 47
Disembodied spirit, 282
Disintegration of personality, 205
Dislocation of a personality, 191, 199
Dispensation, Mosaic, 260
Dispersal of a crowd, 173
Dissent, Church and, 109, 114, 115, 118, 120, 136
Dissipation of energy, 31, 326
Dissolution, 167
Distance, action at a, 45
Distasteful, cravings hypnotically, 262
Distinction between life and vitality, 158
between transitory and permanent, 173
Distrust of Church by people, 145
Disturbance caused by life, 58
Divine anger, 246, 248, 251
attributes, 16, 37, 223, 297, 311
control, 21
forgiveness, 268
immanence, 174
jealousy, 265
kinship of human and, 175, 182
love, 257
permeance, 22
pity, 248
potentiality of, 293
sacrifice, 257
service, 147, 150
sonship, 311
spirit, incarnation of, 221
spirit, spark of, 315
suffering, 232, 257, 267
sympathy, suffering, and joy, 320
wrath, 228, 248, 249
Divinity of Christ, 297, 311, 313
of Christ, humanity and, 239, 311
of man, 319
union with, 234
Doctors and quacks, 114
Doctrine, evangelical, 220
evidences of, 295
orthodox, 279
Pauline, 160
of resurrection, Christian, 160

Doctrines, criticism of, 295
of Rome, 95
truth in accepted, 236
Documents, ancient, 238
Dogmatic agnosticism, 294
Doll and flag, 247
Domain of religion, 208
of science, 209
Dominance, 70, 186
of personality, 177
of spiritual, 69, 180, 183, 292
Domination by faith, 266
Dramatists, Greek, 265
Dream, 190, 277
of life, 200
reality and, 271
and sleep, 200
trance and, 194
Drew foundation, 155
Drinking of blood, 216
Droits de Seigneur, 251
Drop of water, 35
Drugs and prayer, 46
Dualism, 70, 283
Duration of body, 163
Duty, of Church, 141
path of, 232

Eagle, oak, man, 164, 174
Early Christians, 275
Church, 265
Earth, beauty of, 78
evolution of, 60
and heaven, 148
motion of, 75
past history of, 43
security of, 54
atmosphere, 36
Eating of flesh, 216
Ecce Deus, 309, 313
Ecclesiastical Christianity, 301, 307
polity, 130
Ecclesiasticism, 84, 124, 130
Ecstasies, religious, 241
Ecstasy, 123, 302
Eddy of conduct, 267
Edification, 236
extra, 296
history and, 296
Edifice, religious, 56
Education controversy, 84
liberal, 93
Effect on brain, 274
cause and, 42
of penury, 83, 140, 147
Efficacy of prayer, 23
Efficacy of sacraments, 301
Effort, human, 47, 182
struggle and, 183
Egg, hatching of, 224
Elastic forms of words, 97
Electricity, matter and, 173, 329
Element in Christianity, essential, 309, 319
in evil, suicidal, 180
Elgar, Sir Edward, 102
Elijah, Mendelssohn's, 88
Elimination of normal personality, 195
Elohim, 13
Embodied spirit, 279
Embryology, 204
Emendation, 244
Emotion, object and, 247
Emotions recorded in matter, 194
in viscera, 237
Emperor, German, 86
Empty tomb, 55, 59, 287, 290, 312
Encouragement of beneficence, 93
Encroachment, political, 120
on religion, 208
End, beginning and, 31
Energy, 62, 325
conservation of matter and, 172
dissipation of, 31, 326
of food, 69
guidance of, 66, 68, 326
matter and, 180
transference of, 69, 326
of workmen, 69
Energies, Church, 142
Engineering operations, 69, 77
England and America, 186
Enlargement of memory, 196, 200
Enough, love is, 152
Enthusiasm, 123
Entity, controlling, 164
Environment, adaptation to, 203
faculties suiting, 201
Episode, planetary, 282
Epitome of history, 204
Equality, human, 128
Erastian control, 143
Eruption, volcanic, 33
in West Indies, 33
"Essays and Reviews," 15
Essence of Christianity, 309, 319
Essential element in Christianity, 309
Essentials and externals, 298
Established Church, 145
Eternal, character, 171

Eternal, derivation of, 229
hope, 316, 317
music, harmony of, 315
penalty, 229
punishment, 230
Eternity, 172
time and, 175, 314, 316
Ether, 184, 279, 330
and motion, 172
Ethereal body, 160, 280
Ethnological difference, 110
Eucharist, 131
Euripides, 122, 215, 265, 315
Evanescence, 173
Evangelical Christianity, 215, 300
doctrine, 220
Everything, origin of, 171
Evidence, historical, 295
for resurrection, Gospel, 290
tests of, 296
Evidences of doctrine, 295
Evil, 35, 43
definition of good and, 181
good and, 180, 181
influence of, 180
matter and, 280
suicidal element in, 180
Evolution, 16, 18, 27, 29, 34, 43, 78, 179, 182, 202, 204, 221, 227, 248, 310
by-products of, 201
and chance, 39
of earth, 60
Heraclitus and, 163
law of, 181
and progress, 314
and sin, 239
of solar system, 17
Exaltation, spiritual, 266
Example, stimulus of, 265
Excommunication, 120, 303
Excrescences, 236
Executed God, 312
Existence, of Christianity, 61
continuity of, 285
general problem of, 181
grades of, 35, 40
inconspicuous, 184
individual, 183
latent or potential, 169
and perfection, 314
persistence of, 174, 177, 182, 183, 186
struggle for, 39, 201
Existences, other, 41
Expansion and development, 180, 181
Experience, 278
human, 76
Experiment, observation and, 183
Expiation, 244, 260
vicarious, 225
Exploration, 57
Explosion and trigger, 68
Expression, modification of, 213
Extempore prayer, 91, 99
Extermination of heretics, 120
Externals, essentials and, 298
Extinction, selfishness and, 233
Extra edification, 296

Fact, historical basis of, 301
Factory analogue, 32
Faculties, rudimentary, 202
suiting environment, 201
Faculty, subliminal, 196
Failures and mistakes, 42
Fair opportunity, 294
Faith, 23, 209
ages of, 266
domination by, 266
healing, 47, 71
of poets and seers, 180
salvation by, 300
and service, 302, 306
substance of, 109, 181
Fanatic, 214, 229
Farnell, Dr., 217
Far-off interest of tears, 249
Father, in Lord's Prayer, 102
Roman, 253
Fatherhood of God, 253, 298
Fathers, Pilgrim, 119
Fatted calf, 260
Fear, 248
of God, 246
of trespassing, 209
Fiat, creative, 31, 61
Fiends, modern, 148
Figurative sayings, 308
Figure, mathematical, 247
First cause, 31, 171
six centuries, 300
Fish, deep-sea, 75
Fission, multiplication by, 224
Fittest, survival of the, 201
Fixed petitions, 91
Flag, doll and, 247
Flashes, lucidity in, 195
Flesh and blood, 128, 216
and bones, 255, 291
eating of, 216
and spirit, 280

Fleshly school of poetry, 281
Flints, 78
Flock, folds one, 108
Flux, universal, 162
Fly and child, 50
  in laboratory, 58
Folds one flock, 108
Food, energy of, 69
  incorporation of, 164
Fool, blatant, 229
Force, guiding, 67, 325, 328
  momentum and, 67, 322, 327
Forces of nature, 49
Foreign Theological Magazines, 84
Foremen analogue, 32
Forensic scheme of salvation, 300
Foreshadowing by genius, 205
Forgiveness, 268
  divine, 268
  of sins, 111, 113, 116
Forms and ceremonies, 124
  of words, elastic, 97
  of worship, 121
Formula for death, 10
  ordination, 105, 113
  test, 105
Formularies, 87, 89, 117, 135
  oaths and, 138
  revision of, 214
Forsyth, Dr., 155
Forty days, the, 150, 290, 318
Foundation, scientific, 55, 56
  solid, 54
  and superstructure, 53
Foundations for religion, 53, 55
Fox, George, 122
Fraud, 192
Free agents, 316, 318
  Church, 143
  Churches, State Church and, 106, 109, 142
  churchman, high Anglican and, 118
  will, 42, 253, 294, 315, 316, 317
Friendship, 282
Fruits, 147, 151, 306
Future, past, present and, 79, 148, 177
Future race, 205

Galvanometer, spider in, 58
Ganges, 162
Garbling, spoiling and, 296
Garden analogy, 276
  cultivation of, 241
  watering, 8
Gardener, request to, 8
Gardening, 47
"Gareth and Lynette," 54
Garment of God, living, 31
General nature of sacrament, 126
  problem of existence, 181
  resurrection, 286
Generation of vipers, 250
Genius, 39, 41, 73, 190, 195, 201, 202
  foreshadowing by, 205
German Emperor, 86
Germany, America, Judæa, Rome, 298
Ghost or vision, 274
Gifford lectures, 174
Gladstone, Mr., 86, 87
Glorification of body, 280
Glory in suffering, 265
God, attributes of, 16, 37, 297, 311
  anger of, 246, 248, 251
  behold the, 313
  and bereavement, 319
  bull of, 216
  Christ and, 256, 257, 297, 304, 310, 311, 318, 319
  crucified, 312
  fatherhood of, 253, 298
  fear of, 246
  humanity of, 310, 312, 319
  and humanity, 310
  image of, 320
  jealous, 228, 248
  kingdom of. *See* Kingdom of Heaven
  living, 246
  living garment of, 31
  love of, 318
  man and, 175, 183, 315, 318, 319, 320
  meaning of term, 257
  and nature, 172
  as origin of everything, 171
  revelation of, 310, 318, 319
  son of, 224, 256
  sons of, 313
  and suffering, 318, 31
  sympathising, 318
  and the universe, 273, 314
  winepress of wrath of, 245
  worship of, 308
  wrath of, 246
Godhead, conception of, 311
  revelation of, 297
  unity of, 314
Gods of Olympus, 319

Goethe, 31
Going to church, 85
Good and evil, 180, 181
and evil, definition of, 181
or not good, 256
persistence of the, 180, 181
works, 151, 302, 306
Goodness, innate, 276
Gorgias, 233, 242
Gospel, evidence for resurrection, 290
narratives, 296
teaching, 220
tragedy of the, 219
Gothic cathedral, 124
Grace, means of, 123, 124
Grades of existence, 35, 40, 51
of sin, 251
Grave, personality in, 286
Gravitation, 36
Great first cause, 31, 171
Greatest, difficulty of recognising, 250
Greed, 43, 148
Greek Church, 251, 303
Church, sacraments in, 302
dramatists, 265, 315
Testament, 87
Green leaves, 69
Grit, 230
Groupings, aggregations and, 173
Growth, 180
and death of body, 273
Grub and insect, 202, 203, 204
Guidance, 38, 40, 42, 45, 67, 68, 76, 79, 316, 327
and control, 75
definition of, 66
of energy, 66, 68, 322–328
and law, 62
by life, 66, 69, 326
Guiding force, 67, 328
Guilty, not, 146
verily, 144

Hackney College, 155
Haldane, Mr., 155, 174
Hallucination, 194
Hamlet's politic worms, 164
Hand, clasp of, 209
helping, 248
not stretched out still, 254
Hands, imposition of, 110
Harmony of eternal music, 315
Haste in Liturgy, 101
Hatching of egg, 224
Healing, faith, 71
miracles of, 71
Heat, sun's, 36
Heart, 237
Heaven, earth and, 148
kingdom of, 101, 137, 141, 148, 152, 269, 319
Hebraism and Hellenism, 300
Hebrew prophets, 248
Hecuba, 315
Helium, 170
Hell, damnation of, 250
Hellenism, Hebraism and, 300
Help, 79
human, 100
Helping hand, 248
Heraclitus and evolution, 163, 317
Here and now, 148
Heresy, 254
witchcraft and, 304
Heretics, extermination of, 120
Heroism, 262
Hibbert journal, 217, 235, 236
Hierarchical Christianity, 303
High Anglican and Free Churchman, 118
Higher animals, 177
man and sin, 220, 240
Historic Christ, the, 296
Historical basis of fact, 301
evidence of Christianity, 295
History of Cosmos, 30
of earth, past, 43
and edification, 296
epitome of, 204
making, 76
recapitulation of past, 204
Höffding, Prof., 138, 178
Holy Ghost, sin against, 250
of holies, 228
Spirit, 110
Homilies, 96, 126
Hood, Thomas, 124
Hope, eternal, 316, 317
Horology, 157, 162
Hort and Westcott, 102
Hostility of priests, 227
How hardly, 203
Human co-operation, 252
development, 78
and divine, kinship of, 175, 182
effort, 47, 182
equality, 128
experience, 76
God, 310, 312
help, 100

Human impotence, 261
life, modern, 78
Messiah, 307
misery, 147
personality, 197
power, 78, 79, 100
responsibility, 79, *preface*
Humanity of Christ, 291, 293, 307, 312, 313
and divinity of Christ, 239, 311
God and, 310
of God, 319
persistence of, 175
welfare of, 139
Huxley, Professor, 12, 13
Hymns Ancient and Modern, 217
atonement in, 218
Hypatia, Kingsley's, 312
Hyperæsthesia, 190
Hyperbole, Oriental, 245
Hyperphysical truth, 289
Hypnosis, 46
Hypnotically distasteful, cravings, 262
Hypnotism, 193
Hysterics, 206, 207

Iceberg analogue, 47
Iconoclasm, 247
Ideal, Christian, 132
Idealism, 283
Ideas of immortality, crude, 286
Identity, 178
of body, 161, 163, 291
of control, 196
of organism, 162
of person, 293
of river, 162, 163
Idol, sacrifice to, 78
Idolatry, 218, 246, 247, 248, 320
Ignorance of science, 270
Illingworth, Rev. J. R., 264
Image of God, 320
Immaculate conception, 221
Immanence, 174, 224, 225, 318
and Incarnation, 310
and transcendence, 178
Immortality of character, 178
crude ideas of, 286
death, and annihilation, 167
definition of, 179
man and, 175
Impatience of reformer, 137
Imperfection, 42, 243, 253, 262
in nature, 314
Importance of action ,151
Importance of size, 36
of telepathy, 189
Imposition of hands, 110
Impotence, human, 261
Impressiveness of liturgy, 101
Improbability of miracle, 71
Improvement, social, 294
Imputed righteousness, 215
sin, 215
Inattention, 88
Incantation, 302
Incarnation, 59, 152, 160, 222, 226, 227, 254, 273, 274, 275, 287, 288, 291, 292, 312
of Christ, 293
of Divine Spirit, 221
immanence and, 310
and resurrection, the, 299
Inconspicuous existence, 184
Incorporation of food, 164
Increase of value, 179, 181
Incredible articles, 90
Incrustations on ship, 90
Indies, West, eruption in, 33
Indifference to comfort, 266
to pain and loss, 265
popular, 83
Indirect religious influences, 108, 122, 123, 126
Individual and race, 204
development of, 197
existence, 183
religion, 125
survival, 183
Individuality, 162, 177, 187
of animals, 177
personality and, 293
Inequality, 78
Infancy, protection of, 79
Infant salvation, 112, 127
Infidel, 71
Infinite attributes, 311
in tune with the, 182
punishment, 220
repentance, 220
Infinitude, 244
Infinity and subtraction, 208
Influence of the Church, 149
of evil, 180
of riches, 203
social, 143
Influences, indirect, religious, 122, 123, 126
Inheritance, taint of, 222
Initiation by life and mind, 67, 68
Innate goodness, 276

Innocent victim, 215
Inquiry, legitimacy of, 209
Inquisition, 127, 252
Insect, grub and, 202, 203, 204
  in laboratory, 58
Inspiration, 39, 123, 193, 195, 202, 277
  of Christ, 297
Institutions, Mosaic, 304
Intellectual obstacles, 140
Intelligence, discarnate, 194
  grades of, 51
Intelligences, other, 41
Intelligibility, 101, 209
  of universe, 208
Intention of universe, 209
Interaction of God and universe, 273
  of mind and matter, 273, 278, 289
Intercessory prayer, 100
Intercommunication, 196
Interest of tears, far-off, 249
Intermediate character of Christianity, 272
Interpretation of Articles, 135
Intervention, supernatural, 6, 8, 10, 31, 44, 58, 59, 64
Introspection and activity, 40
Intuition, 123
In tune with the Infinite, 182
Inventions, 316
Investigation, 74, 76
  objection to, 208
Isaiah, 150
Isolation, 22

Jacks, The Rev. L. P., 217
Jahveh, 13
James, St., 302
Japanese soldiers, 266
Javelin, 30
Jealous God, 228, 248
Jealousy, divine, 265
Jehovah, 13, 215, 228, 229
Jesus, divinity of, 313
  of Nazareth, body of, 288
  revelation of, 257
  sayings of, 305
  suffering and death of, 219
Jewel and facets, 226
  and casket, 281
Jewish law and sacrifice, 258
Joan of Arc, 288
Job, 243, 264
John, St., 302
Joy of the Lord, 77
  path of, 232
  sympathy and suffering divine, 320
Judæa, Rome, Germany, America, 298
Judaising Christianity, 304
Judgment, private, 125

Kant, 176, 197
Keats, 200
Kenosis, 257
Kingdom, 101, 102, 137, 141, 269
  of heaven, 148, 152, 319, *preface*
King's Sovereignty, oath of the, 120
Kingsley's *Hypatia*, 312
Kinship of human and divine, 175, 182, 315–320
Knowledge, boundaries of, 208
Korah, 58

Laboratory, live insect in, 58
Labour of planet, 43
Lamb, wrath of, 238, 244, 245, 263
Lamentation, brooding and, 241
Language of worship, 286
Larvæ, 204
Larval characters, 203
Last Supper, 128
  trumpet, 275
Latent or potential existence, 169
Latin prayer-book, 87
  prayers, 101
Lateran Council decree, 119
Law, 23, 38, 41, 44, 49, 63
  breach of, 44
  of evolution, 181
  and guidance, 62
  Mosaic, 258, 259
  and order, 64
  Roman canon, 119
  sacredness of, 229
Laws of Mechanics, 67, 321
Layman, 111, 130
Lazarus, 255
Leaf, dew on a, 173
Leaven, 137
Leaves, green, 69, 330
Lectern, 100
Lectures, Gifford, 174
Legend, Christian, 213
  sacrificial, 232
Legends, 14
Legislation, 76

Legislative change, 92
Legitimacy of inquiry, 209
Leisure, absence of, 85
Lenience towards sin, 98
Levitation of saints, 59
Liberal education, 93
Life, 158
  aim of, 199
  and brain, 68
  and death, 159, 184, 200
  disturbance caused by, 58
  dream of, 200
  and guidance, 66, 69, 316
  and mind, 24, 38, 67, 68, 70
  and mind, initiation by, 67, 68
  modern human, 78
  and movement, 317
  and organism, 178
  origin of, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 60
  and soul, 166
  and vitality, distinction between, 158
Light, 69, 329
Limited brain, 199
Link between psychical and physical, 68, 69, 184, 186; *see* also Brain
Links between worlds, 278
Litanies, 241
Litany, the, 98
Literature, 103
Liturgy, the, 89, 98, 133
  American, 91
  impressiveness of, 101
Live insect in laboratory, 58
Living garment of God, 31
  God, 246
Loaf, single, 128
Logos, 152
  doctrine, 310
  reincarnation of, 152
  and universe, 166
Lombroso, 192
Loneliness, 51
Looms, analogue, 32
Lord, joy of the, 77
Lord's Prayer, 101, 102, 268
Loss, indifference to pain and, 265
Love, 280
  of the brethren, 302
  divine, 257
  is enough, 152
  of God, 318
  versus selfishness, 282
Lower animals, 168, 177
Loyalty to dead formularies, 97
Lucidity, 48, 207
  in flashes, 195
Luke, St., 102
Lux Mundi, 255, 258, 263, 264
Luxury, 144
Lynette, Gareth and, 54
Lyttelton, Dr. Arthur, 258, 263, 264

Machinery, 27, 31, 32, 230
Magazines, foreign theological, 84
Magdalene, 239
Magi and shepherds, 289
Magnificat, 145
Making history, 76
Mammon worship, 78, 144
Man, ancestry of, 17
  co-operation of, 317
  destiny of, 315
  divinity of, 319
  eagle, oak, 164, 174
  and God, 183, 315, 318, 319, 320
  and immortality, 175
  permanence of, 175, 182
  primitive, 78
  progress of, 315
  redemption of, 234
  revelation by nature and, 314
  and sin, higher, 220
  and the universe, 182, 315, 318
  worship of God, and service of, 308
Manager, traffic, 68
Manhood of Christ, 288
Manifestations, possible, 191
Many, one and, 234
Marcus Curtius, 58
Martineau, Dr., 107
Martyr, 46
Mary, Virgin, 221
Mass of opinion, oscillating, 300
Masterman, Rev. Professor, 237
Material accessories, 274, 306
  aggregates, 171
  aspect of universe, 270, 331
  aspects of Christianity, 299
  link between psychic and, 186
  side of religion, 277
  spiritual and, 122, 160, 161, 185, 186, 272, 301
  and spiritual Christianity, 305
  vehicle, 126, 278
Materialisation, 190, 192
Materialising tendency, 274
Materialism, 224, 271, 292

Materialism, crude, 218
glorified, 225
in religion, 294
Materialistic side of Christianity, 298
Mathematical figure, 247
Matter, conservation of, 169, 329
and electricity, 173
emotions recorded in, 194
and energy, conservation of, 172, 180
and evil, 280
interaction with, 273, 278, 289
life and, 66
mind and, 279, 283
spirit and, 166, 274, 277, 278, 292
Meaning of term God, 257
Meaninglessness to animals, 168
Means of grace, 123, 124
Mechanical completeness, 67
services, 88, 89
uniformity, 93, 135
Mechanics, laws of, 67, 321
Mechanism, 28, 31
of communication, 187
connecting, 184
control of, 198
physiological, 185
Mediæval mind, modern and, 298
Mediator, 269
Christianity as, 272
Medical cases, 199
miracles, 71
Medium, 192
Members bound together, 267
struggle among, 261
Memory, brain and, 185
consciousness and, 183
enlargement of, 196, 200
strata of, 199
Men, ministry of best, 144
Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, 88
Mental activity, 187
pathology, 205
and physical, 289
Message to the Churches, 149
Messages, authenticity of, 194
vagueness of, 196
Messiah, 256, 307
Meteorological office, 9
Meteors, 49
Methods of telepathy, 188
Micro-organisms, 252
Militant, Church, 147
Millionaires, 151
Millstone round neck, 252
Milton, 91
Mimicry, 203
Mind and body, 189
controlling, 69
life and, 24, 38, 67, 70
and life, initiation by, 67, 68
and matter, 273, 279, 283
modern and mediæval, 298
soul, and spirit, 166
sympathetic, 168
world, 188
Minimising of sacraments, 301
Ministers, church, and cabinet, 144
Ministry of best men, 144
training for, 103, 104
Miracle, 64, 65, 70
categories of, 59
improbability of, 71
varieties of, 57, 58, 59, 61
Miracles, 14, 15, 57, 72, 80, 289, 299
arguments concerning, 60
Christian, 59, 289, 299
of healing, 71
not miraculous, 80
physical, 299
and poetry, 72
of saints, 59
Mire, struggling in, 248, 250
Misery, human, 147
Mission of priest, 272
Missionaries, 152, 247
Mistakes, 42
M'Leod Campbell, 263
Moberly, Canon, 255, 256, 257
Modern fiends, 148
human life, 78
and mediæval mind, 298
science, 14, 18, 24, 25, 33
Modification of expression, 213
Mohammedanism, 266
Momentum, conservation of, 67
and force, 67, 327
Monism, 279, 283
Monotony, 317
Morris, Wm., 141, 152
Mortality, mutability and, 181
Mosaic ceremonies, 258
dispensation, 260
institutions, 304
law, 259
Moses, 288
Moth and rust, 145
Mother suffering, 268

Mother, worship of the, 311
Motion of earth, 75
ether and, 172, 321
thought and, 184
transference of, 176, 326
Motor car, 62
Mountain path, analogue, 68
Movement, life and, 317
M'Taggart, Prof., 155, 156
Multiple personality, 199
Multiplication by fission, 224
Mundane affairs, 196
Murray, Professor Gilbert, 215, 216, 217, 315
Muscle, brain, nerve, 68, 184, 188, 322
Music, 101, 169
harmony of eternal, 297
and ornament, 301
pictures and, 194
Mutability and mortality, 181
Mutilation and spoiling, 305
Myers, F. W. H., 182, 197, 201, 202, 203, 206, 207
Mystery of pain, 249, 264, 315
Mystic, 273
Mystical Christianity, 302
spirit, 292
Mysticism, 126, 271, 294

Narratives, Gospel, 296
National Church, 106, 118, 119, 120, 136, 137, 138, 141, 143
Church, wings of a, 118
sin, 100
Nativity, the, 289
Natural law, prayer and, 7
selection, 203
theology, 297
Naturalism, 271
Naturalist, business of, 272
Nature of Christ, 254
forces of, 49
and God, 172
and man, revelation by, 314
imperfection in, 314
revelation of, 133
of sacrament, general, 126
Navvies, energy of, 69
Nebula, 29
Neck, millstone round, 252
Neon, 170
Nero, 252
Nerve, muscle, brain, 68, 184
Newman, Cardinal, 96, 116, 133
Newton, 35, 37
Niagara, 35
Nicene Creed, 284
Nile, 162
Nirvana, 317
Nonconformity, 119, 124
Nonentity, 169, 170, 171, 174
No real waste, 181
Normal personality, elimination of, 195
Not destroy but fulfil, 259
Not guilty, 146
Now, here and, 148

Oak, eagle, man, 164, 174
Oath of the King's Sovereignty, 120
Oaths and formularies, 138
Obedience, 119
Object and emotion, 247
Objection to investigation, 208
to scientific pursuits, socialistic, 139, 146
Objections, religious, 207
Oblation, sacrifice and, 301
Obligations, clerical, 119
Observation and experiment, 183
Obsolete statutes, 97
Obstacles, intellectual, 140
to union, 117
Occurrences, supernormal, 289
Ocean currents, 36
ships in analogue, 198
Offering, burnt, 215
Office, priestly, 301, 303
Old Testament system, 259
Olympus, Gods of, 319
Omnipotence, 16
Once and for all, 301
One and many, 234
Operations, engineering, 69
Opinion, oscillating mass of, 300
Opportunity, fair, 294
Opposite dispositions in religion and science, 11
Opposition to abuses, 93
Optimism, 180, 181
Order, law and, 64
Ordering of deacons, 120
of priests, 113
Orders, Anglican recognition of, 111
Ordination, 113
formula, 105
service, 103, 115
Organ and organist analogue, 186
of thought, brain, 185
Organic chemistry, 20
Organism, construction of, 166

Organism, identity of, 162
life and, 178
soul and, 166
Organisms, variety of, 164
Organist, organ and, 186
Oriental hyperbole, 245
Origin, animal, 221
of baptism, 127
of everything, 171
God as, 171
of life, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 60
of species, 38
of variations, 38
Original sin, 220, 222
Origins, 29
Ornament, music and, 301
Ornaments, rubric, 148
Orphism, 215, 216
Orthodox doctrine, 279
science, 6, 25, 39
Orthodoxies, cluster of rival, 108
Orthodoxy, 2, 221
Oscillating mass of opinion, 300
Other intelligences, 41
Other worlds, 41, 316
Over pressure, 85

Pagan precedents, 218
survival, 275
teaching, 285
Paganism, Christianity and, 311
Pain, 264, 267, 268
and loss, indifference to, 265
mystery of, 249, 264, 315
Pains and sorrows, 265
Pallas and Zeus, 223
Pan-Anglican Congress, 134, 149
Pantheism, 5, 33
and philosophy, 311
Papal supremacy, 119, 120
Parable of the talents, 77
"Paracelsus," Browning's, 204, 206
Paralysis of will, 206
Parent of radium, 170
Parentage, 79, 222
Parliament, 133
prayer book and Act of, 133
Parliamentary responsibility, 94
Parthenogenesis, 222, 223
Participation, common, 128
Particles, arrangement of, 164
Parting prayer of Christ, 108
Parts of reality, 70
Past history of earth, 43
history, recapitulation of, 204
present, and future, 79, 148, 177
Pastoral work, 116
Path of duty, path of joy, 232
mountain, 68
Pathological cases, 199, 206, 207
Pathology, mental, 205
Pauline teaching, 160, 285, 291
Paul, St., 128, 261, 262, 280, 300, 310
Paul's vision, St., 289
Pen, analogue, 283
Penalty, eternal, 229
inevitable, 267
vicarious, 263, 269
Pendulum, analogue, 300
swinging, 299
Penitence, 241, 244, 249
Pentecost, 127, 132
Penury, effect of, 83, 140, 147
People, distrust of Church by, 145
Perfection, 244
existence and, 314
struggle towards, 314, 315
Permanence of man, 175, 182
Permanent, transitory and, 155, 173, 176
Permeance, divine, 22
Persecuting Christianity, 304
Persistence of existence, 174, 177, 182, 183, 186, 285
of the good, 180, 181
of humanity, 175
of personality, 182, 190
of the real, 178
Person, identity of, 293
Personality, 21, 34, 177, 226, 253
of animals, 177
definition of, 177
disintegration of, 205
dislocation of a, 191, 199
dominance of, 177
elimination of normal, 195
in grave, 286
human, Myers, 197
and individuality, 293
multiple, 199
persistence of, 182, 190
Pestilence, 215
Peter, St., 301
Peter's affirmation, 256
Petition for civic improvement, 65
Petitions, fixed, 91
Phagocytes, 252
Phantasm, 290
Pharisees, 227, 238, 250
Phenomena, physical, 192
Philosopher, business of, 272

Philosophy, 174
pantheism and, 311
Photographic records, 194
Phrases, words and, 286
Physical identity of body, 291
link between psychical and, 184
mental and, 289
miracles, 299
phenomena, 192, 289
psychical and, 187, 188
and psychical, brain, link between, 68, 69
Physics and chemistry, 166
Physiological mechanism, 185
Picture or statue, 167, 168
Pictures and music, 194
Pilgrim fathers, 119
Pilgrim's Progress, 261
Pity, divine, 248
Plan, 67
Planet, labour of, 43
Planetary episode, 282
Plants, care of, 276
weeds and, 241
Plato, 77, 78, 197, 233, 242
symposium, 78, 233
Plotinus, 123
Pobiedonostieff, 303
Poetry, art and, 63
fleshly school of, 281
miracles and, 72
Poets, 280
and seers, faith of, 180
Point of view, change of, 299
Politic worms, Hamlet's, 164
Political encroachment, 120
Polity, ecclesiastical, 130
Pompeii, 58
Pope, 38
Popular beliefs, truth in, 231
indifference, 83
Portion of scheme, conscious, 234
Positivism, 271, 311
Possession, 193
Possible manifestations, 191
Potential existence, latent or, 169
Potentialities of soul, 166
unguessed, 204
Potentiality of divine, 293
Power, human, 78, 79, 100
for righteousness, 232
temporal, 303
Powers, priestly, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 221
supernormal, 73
Practical Christianity, 302, 306
Practical religion, spiritual and, 308
Practice, Continental medical, 71
theory and, 229
Præternormal psychology, 190
Prayer, 22, 45, 46, 48, 50, 51, 57, 65, 79, 80
of Christ, parting, 108
disbelief in, 299
and drugs, 46
efficacy of, 23
extempore, 91, 99
intercessory, 100
Lord's, 101, 102, 268
and natural law, 7
for rain, 7, 8, 9
Prayer-book, 113, 133
and Act of Parliament, 133
American, 91
Latin, 87
revision, 92, 94
Prayers, Latin, 101
Praying-wheel, Thibetan, 89
Precedents, Pagan, 218
Predestination, 267
Pre-existence, 226
Premonition and clairvoyance, 39, 190
Presbyter, priest and, 118
Presbyterian, synod, 111
Presbyterians, 143
Presence, real, 131
Present, past, and future, 148, 177
world, beauty of, 301
Pretensions, sacerdotal, 117
Priest, mission of, 272
and Presbyter, 118
victim and, 217
Priesthood, 111, 114, 129, 130, 131, 132
Priestly office, 301, 303
powers, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 221
Priests, 246, 248
hostility of, 227
ordering of, 113
Primitive Christianity, 145
man, 78
Prisons, 243, 251
Private judgment, 125
Privilege, clerical, 119
Probationary discipline, 272
Problem of existence, general, 181
Prodigal son, 259
Prodigy, child, 73
Progress, development and, 78, 314, 317

Progress of man, 78, 315
Prophet, 73, 145, 245
Prophets, Hebrew, 248
  stoning the, 250
Property, security of, 78, 145
Propitiation, 258, 260, 263, 267, 269
Prostitution, 281
Protecting atmosphere, 51
Protection of infancy, 79
Protestant and Catholic, 113, 118
Protoplasm, 60, 159
Providences, special, 64, 80
Psalms, 245
Psalter, 88, 99
Psychic and material, link between, 186
Psychical, brain link between physical and, 68, 69
  and physical, 184, 187, 188
  research, 74, 75, 192
  Research, Society for, 290
Psychology, 39
  præternormal, 190
Psychopathology, 207
Punishment, eternal, 230
  infinite, 220
  sin and, 240
  vicarious, 215, 220, 239, 254, 260, 263
Purpose, 67, 68

Quacks, doctors and, 114
Quakers, 131

Race and individual, 204
Radium, 170
  parent of, 170
Railway train analogue, 66
  time-table, 68
Rain, prayer for, 7, 8, 9
Rat-hunt, 57
Rayleigh, Lord, 35
Re-action, action and, 67, 323
Reading-desk, 100
Real, persistence of the, 178
  presence the, 131
Reality, 273
  Christian, 225
  and dream, 271
  parts of, 70
  of service, 100
Rebellion, 242
  sin and, 265, 316
Recapitulation of past history, 204
Recognition of orders, 111
Recognition of religion, State, 142
Reconciler, 273
Reconciliation, 26, 51
  in excelsis, 5
Recorders, stupidity of, 297
Records, 305
  photographic, 194
Redemption of man, 234
Reed, bruised, 253
Reform, social, 134
  of social abuses, 151
  spiritual, 268
Reformer, impatience of, 137
Regeneration, 149, 262, 268
  baptismal, 112
Regimental flag, 247
Regulations, rigid, 95
Reincarnation of logos, 152
Re-incorporation, 106
Reindeer, carving, 78
Rejoining of body, 275
Religion, 272
  aids to, 247
  domain of, 208
  encroachment on, 208
  individual, 125
  material side of, 277
  materialism and, 294
  mysticism in, 294
  practical, 306
  and science, 53
  and science, opposite dispositions in, 11
  spiritual and practical, 308
  State recognition of, 142
  of truth and clearness, 214
Religious atmosphere, scientific and, 25
  controversies, 106, 142
  ecstasies, 241
  edifice, 56
  influences, indirect, 122, 123, 126
  objections, 207
  types, different, 110, 111, 115, 118, 121, 139
Remission of sin, 98
Remorse, 249, 268
Repentance, 261
  infinite, 220
Reproduction, 221, 222, 223, 224
Request to gardener, 8
Research, psychical, 74, 75, 192, 290
Responsibility, human, 77, 79
  of Parliament, 94
Restoration work, 236

Resurrection, 59, 207, 254, 255, 285
of body, 160, 274, 277, 284, 286, 287, 290, 312
of Christ, 287, 290, 291
Christian doctrine of, 160, 275
the general, 286
Gospel evidence for, 290
the incarnation and, 299
body, 285
Resuscitation, 255, 284, 290
Returning animation, agony of, 268
Revelation, 245
accessible, 274
of Christ, 223, 318
of Deity, 293, 304, 314
or discovery, 226
of God, 297, 310, 318, 319
of Jesus, 257
of nature, 133
by nature and man, 314
by science, 314
"Reviews, Essays and," 15
Revision, 92
creeds and, 214
of formularies, 214
of prayer-book, 92, 94
Revival or survival, 285
Riches, 78, 203
and idolatry, 78
rust and moth, 145
Richet, Professor, 192
Righteousness, imputed, 215
power for, 232
Rigid regulations, 95
Rise in three days, 255
Ritualism, 302
Rival orthodoxies, cluster of, 108
River, identity of, 162, 163
Roman canon law, 119
Church, 119
father, 253
Rome, 221
Germany, America, Judæa, 298
doctrines of, 95
Roosevelt, President, 86
Rosewater, 246
Rossetti, 281
Rubric ornaments, 148
Rubrics, 93
Rudimentary faculties, 202
Rules, Church, 94
Ruskin, 98, 141
Russia, Church in, 251, 303
Rust, moth, and, 145
Sabbatarianism, 250, 304
Sacerdotalism, 114, 117, 131
Sacrament, general nature of, 126
Sacramental side of love, 280
Sacraments, 123, 124, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 225, 292, 294
ceremony and, 306
efficiency of, 301
in Greek Church, 302
minimising of, 301
two or seven, 126
Sacredness of law, 229
Sacrifice, 35, 150, 215, 216, 218, 231, 259
of Christ, 244
Divine, 257
to idol, 78
Jewish, 258
and oblation, 301
and sin, 258
of squalor and ugliness, 78
Sacrificial legend, 232
Sailor, shipwrecked, 49, 58
Saint Chrysostom, 99
James, 302
John, 302
Luke, 102
Paul, 128, 261, 262, 280, 300, 310
Paul's vision, 289
Peter, 301
Saints, communion of, 48
levitation of, 59
worship of, 311
Salpêtrière, 205, 206
Salvation, 228, 231, 233
army, 237
of body, 276
of body and soul, 294
by faith, 300
forensic scheme of, 300
infant, 112, 127
ultimate, 316
Samaria, woman of, 110
"Saul," Browning's, 209, 257
Sayings, figurative, 308
of Jesus, 305
Scapegoat, 258
Scepticism, 294
wholesome, 313
Sceptics and scoffers, 303
Scheme, conscious portion of, 234
of salvation, forensic, 300
Schiaparelli, 192
Schism, 114

Scholastic theology, 103
Science, Bible and, 15
Christianity and, 298
domain of, 209
ignorance of, 270
modern, 14, 18, 24, 25, 33
orthodox, 6, 25, 39
and religion, 53
revelation by, 314
and theology, 40
Scientific atmosphere, 4
foundation, 55, 56
pursuits, socialistic objection to, 139, 146
and religious atmospheres, 11, 25
and religious outlook contrasted, 6
Scoffers and sceptics, 303
Screen, atmospheric, 49
Scrutiny, scientific, 56, 273
Séance room, 58
Seasons, times and, 302
Secession, 119
Second Advent, 152, *preface*
Sectarianism, 3
Secularism, 106, 271
Security of earth, 54
of property, 78, 145
Seers, faith of poets and, 180
Selection, artificial, 38
natural, 203
Self, 177
accusation, 98
complexity of, 199
contribution to worship, 87
sacrifice, 261, 262
subliminal, 197, 226
Selfishness and extinction, 233
love *versus*, 282
of society, 145
Semi-parentage, 222
Senses, 278
Sequence, antecedents and, 171
Sermon, 91
Service, 294
abbreviated, 92
burial, 275
Church, 86
communion, 98
divine, 147, 150
faith and, 302, 306
of man, worship of God and, 308
ordination, 103, 115
reality of, 100
work and, 317
Services, mechanical, 88, 89
Seven devils, 241
Sex, 224
Sexual reproduction, 223
Shakespeare, 39
Shares, stocks and, 78, 145
Shelley, 200, 204
Shepherds, Magi and, 289
Ship, analogue of, 198
water-logged, 90
Ships in ocean, 198
Shipwrecked sailor, 49, 58
Signs and wonders, 74
Siloam, Tower of, 264
Simplicity of worship, 124
Sin, 43, 98, 242, 249, 261
against Holy Ghost, 250
birth, 220
burden of, 261, 263
confession of, 144
conviction of, 267
corporate, 98, 100, 145
definition of, 242, 261
as disease, 267
evolution and, 239
grades of, 251
higher man and, 220, 240
imputed, 215
lenience towards, 98
national, 100, 145
original, 220, 222
overcome, 238
and punishment, 240
and rebellion, 265, 316
sacrifice and, 258
and suffering, 264
Sinfulness of society, 144
Single loaf, 128
Sinner blatant, 253
Sins, 42
forgiveness of, 111, 113, 116
Six centuries, first, 300
Size, importance of, 36
Sky, blue, 173
Sleep, death and, 200
dream and, 200
Slums, city, 78
Smoke, 78
Snares and temptations, 271
Soap bubble, 30
Social abuses, 294
abuses, reform of, 151
canker, 140
improvement, 294
influence, 143
reform, 134
work, 145

Socialism, Christian, 145–152, 276, 294, 302
Socialistic objection to scientific pursuits, 139, 146
Society, for Psychical Research, 290
sinfulness of, 98, 100, 144, 145
Socrates, 233, 275, 285
Sodom, 58
Solar system, 30
evolution of, 17
Soldier, Japanese, 266
Soldiers and disease, 243
Solid foundation, 54
Solitary confinement, 251
Son beloved, 319
of God, 224, 256
Sons of God, 226, 313
Sonship, Divine, 311
Sorrow, value of, 315
Sorrows, pains and, 265
Soul and body, 156, 158, 163, 164, 165, 183, 191, 226, 273, 275, 276, 282, 283, 284
Christ's body and, 254
damage to, 166
definition of, 165
disappearance of, 165
life and, 166
and logos, 166
mind, and spirit, 166
and organism, 166
potentialities of, 166
salvation of body and, 294
Southampton, Bishop of, 258
Southwark, Bishop of, 236, 238, 260
Sovereignty, oath of the King's, 120
Space, cosmic, 316
ether of, 184
Spark of Divine Spirit, 315
Special providence, 64, 80
Species, origin of, 38
Speech and writing, 184
Spider in laboratory, 58
Spider's web, 170
Spinoza, 310
Spiral, upward-tending, 180
Spirit, and body, 292
discarnate, 279
disembodied, 282
dominance of, 292
embodied, 279
flesh and, 280
Holy, 110
Incarnation of Divine, 221
and matter, 166, 274, 277, 278, 289
Spirit, mind, and soul, 166
mystical, 292
spark of Divine, 315
Spiritual body, 160, 279, 280, 285, 293
Christianity, material and, 305
dominance of, 69, 180, 183
exaltation, 266
and material, 122, 160, 161, 185, 186, 273, 301
and practical religion, 308
reform, 268
Spiritism, 192
Spiritualism or Idealism, 271, 292
Spleen, 237
Spoiling and mutilation, 296, 305
Spontaneity, 93
Squalor and ugliness, sacrifice of, 78
Stage, children on the, 79
Stages of development, 43, 50
State Church, 106, 136
Church and, 107, 137
Church and Free Churches, 109
recognition of religion, 142
Statements, crudity of, 214
Statue, picture or, 167, 168
Statutes, obsolete, 97
Steady motion *versus* collisions, 76
Stigmata, 71
Stimulus of example, 265
Stocks and shares, 78, 145
Stocktaking, 214
Stoning the prophets, 250
Strata of memory, 199
Stress, 67, 324
Struggle and effort, 183
for existence, 39, 201
among members, 261
towards perfection, 314, 315
of universe, 231
Struggling in mire, 248, 250
Stupidity of recorders, 297
Sub-consciousness, 48
Subliminal faculty, 196
self, 197, 226
self-analogue, 198
Substance of Faith, 109, 181
Subtraction and infinity, 208
Succession, Apostolic, 110, 111, 113, 114
Suffering, 35
of Creator, 267
and death of Jesus, 219
Divine, 232, 257, 267, 318, 319

Suffering, glory in, 265
mother, 268
sin and, 264
sympathy and joy, divine, 320
vicarious, 218, 231, 260, 267
Sufferings, Christ's, 264
Suggestion, 48
anæsthesia by, 46
Suicidal element in evil, 180
Summary of Chapter XII., 292
Sun's heat, 36
Sunset touch, 122
Super-man, 205, 312
Supernatural intervention, 6, 8, 10, 31, 44, 58, 59, 64
Supernormal occurrences, 289
powers, 73
Superstition, 129, 271, 294
Superstructure, 53
foundation and, 53
Supper, Last, 128
Supremacy, Papal, 119, 120
Survival of the fittest, 201
individual, 183
Pagan, 275
revival or, 285
Swinging pendulum, 299
Symbolism, baptismal, 127
Symbols, 247
worship of, 246
Sympathetic mind, 168
Sympathising God, 318
Sympathy, 80, 282
suffering and joy, Divine, 320
Symposium of Plato, 78, 233
Synod, Presbyterian, 111
Syrian Carpenter, 304

Talbot, Dr., 235, 236, 238, 260
Talents, parable of the, 77
Task before us, 273
Teaching, Gospel, 220
Pagan, 285
Pauline, 285, 291
Tear, wear and, 161
Tears, interest of, 249
Te Deum, 89, 99, 101
Teleology, 15, 27
Telepathy, 39, 41, 45, 187, 188, 189, 193, 282
argument from, 187
importance of, 189
methods of, 188
Telergy, 193
Temporal power, 303
Temporary aggregations, 171
Temptations, snares and, 271
Tendency, materialising, 274
Tennyson, 18, 23, 33, 38, 45, 47, 54, 152, 249, 286
Terrestrial animals, 185
body, 161
Testament, Greek, 87
Test formula, 105
of truth, 55
Testimony, 56, 75
Tests, 105, 134, 136
broadening of, 93
of evidence, 296
Theism, 28
Theological magazines, foreign, 84
Theology, 235
natural, 297
scholastic, 103
and science, 40
Theory and practice, 229
Thibetan praying-wheel, 89
Thinker, transcendental, 195
Thinking of brain, 185
Thought, brain organ of, 185
and motion, 184
transference (see telepathy), 188
Three days, rise in, 255
Tiber, 162
Tides, 36
Tiger, ape and, 35
Time and eternity, 175, 314, 316
Times and seasons, 302
Time-table, railway, 68
Tolstoi, 251, 303
Tomb, empty, 55, 59, 287, 290, 312
Torture, 128
of child or animal, 252
Touch, sunset, 122
Tower of Siloam, 264
Tract xc., 96
Tradition, Christianity and, 259
Traffic manager, 68
Tragedy of the Gospel, 219
Training for ministers, 103, 104
Trains, 67
Trance, 48
and dream, 194
Transcendence, 70, 177
immanence and, 178
Transcendental thinker, 195
Transference of energy, 69
of motion, 176
thought, 188
Transfiguration, 280, 288
Transitory and permanent, 155, 176

Transitory and permanent, distinction between, 173
Travailing of creation, 182, 315
Treason, 119, 120
Tree or animal, destruction of, 169
Trespassing, fear of, 209
Trials, troubles and, 125
Trigger-pulling, 68
Trojan women, 315
Troubles and trials, 125
Troy, 315
Trumpet, last, 275
Truth in accepted doctrines, 236
and clearness, religion of, 214
hyperphysical, 289
in popular beliefs, 231
test of, 55
Tune with the Infinite, in, 182
Tyndall, Professor, 7, 9, 48
Types, 219
different religious, 110, 111, 115, 118, 121, 139

Ugliness, sacrifice of squalor and, 78
Ultimate salvation, 316
Unclean, common or, 225
Under-pinning, 55
Unification, 272, 273
Uniformity, 26, 27, 32, 62, 75, 171
Acts of, 92, 107, 119, 120
difficult to grasp, 76
mechanical, 93, 135
Union with divinity, 234
obstacles to, 117
Uniqueness of Christ, 312
Unitarianism, 312
Unitarians, 311
Unity, 279
of Christendom, 108, 137
amid difference, 109
of Godhead, 314
of man and universe, 182
Universal flux, 162, 317
Universe, defects in, 253
development of, 314
God and the, 314
intelligibility of, 208
intention of, 209
interaction of God and, 273
Logos and, 166
man and the, 315, 318
material aspect of, 270
struggle of, 231
unity of man and, 182
Universities, 135
Upward-tending spiral, 180

Vagueness of messages, 196
Value, of ceremonies, 301
conservation of, 178, 179, 182
increase of, 179, 181
of sorrow, 315
Vandalism, 168
Vanishing of a cloud, 173
Vapour, aqueous, 173
Variations, origin of, 38
Varieties of Christianity, 300
of miracle, 57, 58, 59, 61
Variety of organisms, 164
Vehicle, ethereal, 280
material, 126, 278
Veil over Deity, 228
Vengeance, wrath and, 238
Venite, 99
Verily guilty, 144
Vicarious expiation, 225
penalty, 263, 269
punishment, 215, 220, 239, 254, 260, 263
suffering, 218, 231, 260, 267, 268
Vice suicidal, 317
and virtue, 243, 317
Victim, innocent, 215
and priest, 217
View, change of point of, 299
Vigorous will, 242
Vipers, generation of, 250
Virgil, 197
Virgin birth, 59, 222, 223, 224, 225, 274, 312
Mary, 221
Virtue, in church, 301
vice and, 243, 317
Viscera, emotions in, 237
Vision, 190
at Damascus, 289
of deity, 123
ghost or, 274
St. Paul's, 289
Vital element in Christianity, 319
Vitality, 65, 157, 162
and life, 158
Volcanic eruption, 33

Wallace, Dr. A. R., 192
Warp and woof of Christian faith, 308
Waste, no real, 181
Water, drop of, 35
supply, 242
Watering garden, 8
Water-logged ship, 90

Waves, 36
Wealth, accumulation of, 198
Wear and tear, 161
Weather, control over, 8
Web, spider's, 170
Wedding garment, 231, 306
Weeds, 242
  like diseases, 47
  and plants, 241
Welfare of humanity, 139
Wellington, Duke of, 286
Wesleyan Conference, 111
Westcott and Hort, 102
West Indies, 33
White corpuscles, 252
Whole, 63, 77
Wicked, angry with, 244
Wickedness, 50
Wilful blindness, 250
Will, 42, 68
  free, 253, 294, 315, 316, 317
  paralysis of, 206
  vigorous, 242
Willingness of Christ, 262
Wine, bread and, 128
Wine-press of wrath of God, 245
Wings of a National Church, 118
Witchcraft and heresy, 304
Withdrawal of Creeds, 238
Witnesses, cloud of, 45
Woe upon ye, 249
Woman of Samaria, 110
Wonders, signs and, 74, 289
Woof of Christian faith, warp and, 308
Words, of Christ, 305
  elastic, forms of, 97
  and phrases, 286
Wordsworth, 53, 197, 198
Work of the Church, 149
  pastoral, 116
  and service, 317
  social, 145
Works, good, 151, 302, 306
World, beauty of present, 301
  mind, 188
Worlds, links between, 278
  other, 41, 316
Worms, politic, 164
Worship, 147, 271
  blood and, 217
  Church, 147
  forms of, 121
  of God and service of man, 308
  of Jehovah, 229
  language of, 286
  of Mammon, 78, 144
  of the Mother, 311
  of Saints, 311
  self-contribution to, 87
  simplicity of, 124
  of symbols, 246
Wounds, appearance of the, 291
Wrath, 253, 260
  of Christ, 249
  Divine, 228, 246, 248, 249
  of God, winepress of, 245
  of lamb, 238, 244, 245, 263
  and vengeance, 238
Writing, speech and, 184

X-rays, 223

Year, Church's, 91

Zeus, Pallas and, 223

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
General Literature,	2-20
Ancient Cities,	20
Antiquary's Books,	20
Arden Shakespeare,	20
Beginner's Books,	21
Business Books,	21
Byzantine Texts,	21
Churchman's Bible,	22
Churchman's Library,	22
Classical Translations,	22
Classics of Art,	23
Commercial Series,	23
Connoisseur's Library,	23
Library of Devotion,	23
Illustrated Pocket Library of Plain and Coloured Books,	24
Junior Examination Series,	25
Junior School-Books,	26
Leaders of Religion,	26
Little Books on Art,	26
Little Galleries,	27
Little Guides,	27
Little Library,	27
Little Quarto Shakespeare,	29
Miniature Library,	29
Oxford Biographies,	29
School Examination Series,	29
School Histories,	30
Textbooks of Science,	30
Simplified French Texts,	30
Standard Library,	30
Textbooks of Technology,	31
Handbooks of Theology,	31
Westminster Commentaries,	32
Fiction,	32-37
The Shilling Novels,	37
Books for Boys and Girls,	39
Novels of Alexandre Dumas,	39
Methuen's Sixpenny Books,	39

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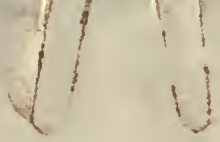

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